

STORY BY KYO SHIRODAIRA ART BY CHASHIBA KATASE



IN/SPECTRE

4

IN/SPECTRE

4



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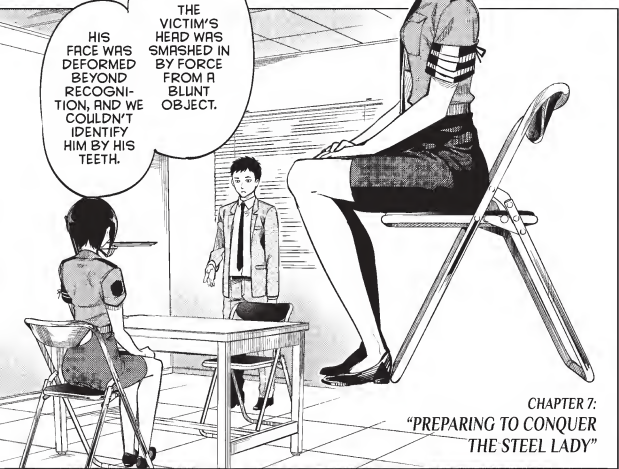


SEP-
TEMBER
4



HIS
FACE WAS
DEFORMED
BEYOND
RECOGNI-
TION, AND WE
COULDN'T
IDENTIFY
HIM BY HIS
TEETH.

THE
VICTIM'S
HEAD WAS
SMASHED IN
BY FORCE
FROM A
BLUNT
OBJECT.



CHAPTER 7:
"PREPARING TO CONQUER
THE STEEL LADY"



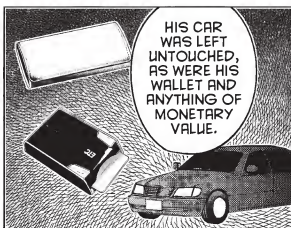
BASED
ON HIS
FINGERPRINTS,
HIS BUILD, AND
THE SCARS ON
HIS BODY, THERE
IS NO QUESTION
THAT HE IS POLICE
SERGEANT
TOKUNOSUKE
TERADA.

BUT WE
FOUND A
CELL PHONE,
LICENSE, AND
EVEN A POLICE
BADGE ON
THE BODY.

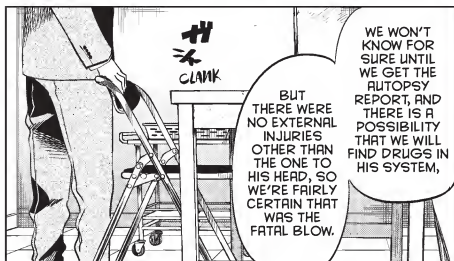


THERE WERE NO SIGNS OF A STRUGGLE— HIS CLOTHES WEREN'T EVEN MUSSD.

NOT ONLY THAT... EVEN THOUGH HE WAS HIT DIRECTLY IN THE FACE,



HIS CAR WAS LEFT UNTOUCHED, AS WERE HIS WALLET AND ANYTHING OF MONETARY VALUE.



BUT THERE WERE NO EXTERNAL INJURIES OTHER THAN THE ONE TO HIS HEAD, SO WE'RE FAIRLY CERTAIN THAT WAS THE FATAL BLOW.

WE WON'T KNOW FOR SURE UNTIL WE GET THE AUTOPSY REPORT, AND THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT WE WILL FIND DRUGS IN HIS SYSTEM,



KILLED IN A DIRECT CONFRONTATION? THIS IS NOT GOING TO BE A SIMPLE CASE.

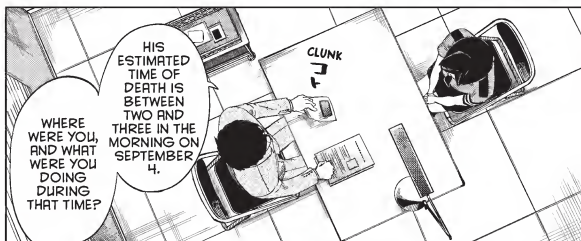
BUT A MAN AS CAREFUL AS HIM,

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT DETECTIVE TERADA WAS DOING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AT AN OLD, ABANDONED GAS STATION.



EITHER THE
MURDERER
WAS SOME-
ONE VERY
CLOSE TO
HIM,

OR THE
TIMING OF
THE ATTACK
WAS SO
UNEXPECTED
THAT HE WAS
LITERALLY
STUNNED.





I WAS
AT HOME
ALONE.



THE BODY
OF WHAT
APPEARED
TO BE AN
ACTIVE DUTY
MAKURAZAKA
POLICE
DETECTIVE WAS
DISCOVERED
AT SIX
O'CLOCK THIS
MORNING.

POLICE
RECEIVED A
REPORT THAT
A BODY WITH A
CRUSHED HEAD
WAS FOUND AT
AN ABANDONED
GAS STATION
ALONG THE
NATIONAL
HIGHWAY.

OFFICERS RAN
TO THE SCENE
TO DISCOVER
A MAN LYING
ON HIS BACK
WITH HIS FACE
SMASHED IN.
THEY CONFIRMED
THE VICTIM WAS
DECEASED.

THE
MAN
WAS...

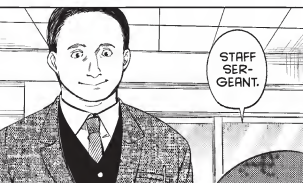
Traffic Division

Makurazaka
Police Station

真倉坂警察署

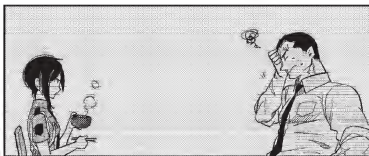


ARE
YOU ALL
RIGHT?



STAFF
SER-
GEANT.





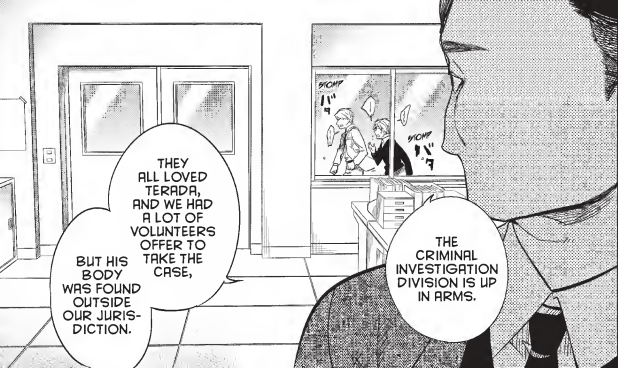
THE
CAUSE OF
DEATH WAS
CEREBRAL
CONFUSION
FROM BLUNT
FORCE TO
THE FACE.

HE DIED
ALMOST
INSTANTLY.

THE
AUTOPSY
REPORT
IS IN.



WE
ASSUME THAT
THE MURDER
WEAPON WAS A
BLUNT OBJECT, LIKE
A CINDER BLOCK OR
PIECE OF LUMBER,
BUT IT HASN'T BEEN
NARROWED DOWN
ANY FURTHER.



BUT HIS
BODY
WAS FOUND
OUTSIDE
OUR JURIS-
DICTION.

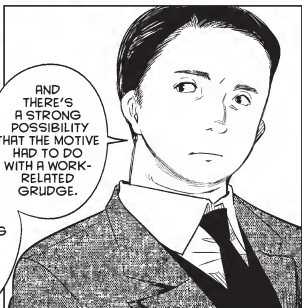
THEY
ALL LOVED
TERADA,
AND WE HAD
A LOT OF
VOLUNTEERS
OFFER TO
TAKE THE
CASE,

THE
CRIMINAL
INVESTIGATION
DIVISION IS UP
IN ARMS.



A LOT OF HIS
COWORKERS
FROM CRIMINAL
INVESTIGATIONS
WERE TAKEN IN
FOR QUESTIONING
JUST LIKE
YOU WERE,
YUMIHARA-KUN.

AND
THERE'S
A STRONG
POSSIBILITY
THAT THE MOTIVE
HAD TO DO
WITH A WORK-
RELATED
GRUDGE.



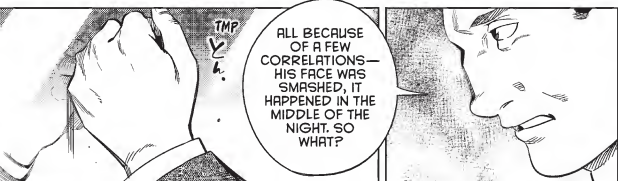
THE
MAKURAZAKA
POLICE
DEPARTMENT
IS ON THE
RECEIVING END
OF THIS INVES-
TIGATION.





BUT
THERE IS A
TENDENCY
FOR PEOPLE
TO TALK
ABOUT
TERADA'S
MURDER...

...IN CON-
JUNCTION
WITH THE
URBAN
LEGEND
THAT CAME
FROM THAT
IDOL'S
DEATH.



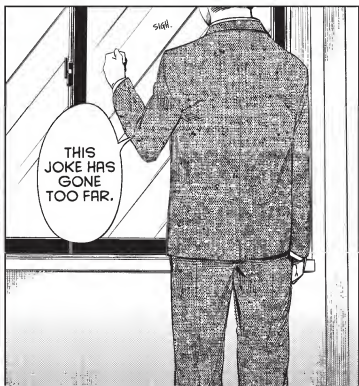
TMP
Y h.

ALL BECAUSE
OF A FEW
CORRELATIONS—
HIS FACE WAS
SMASHED, IT
HAPPENED IN THE
MIDDLE OF THE
NIGHT. SO
WHAT?



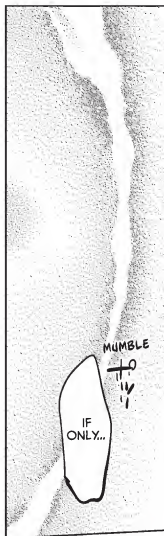
YES...
IT'S SO
IRRESPON-
SIBLE.

GOSSIP-
ING ABOUT
PEOPLE'S
DEATHS
LIKE THAT.



SIGH.

THIS
JOKE HAS
GONE
TOO FAR.



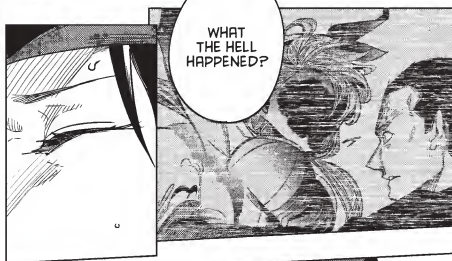
IF ONLY...

MUMBLE

f--



I CAN'T BELIEVE TERADA, OF ALL PEOPLE, WOULD BE BEATEN TO DEATH IN A FRONTAL ASSAULT.

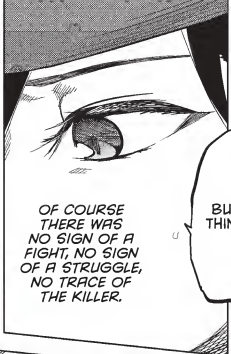


WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?



I SHOULD HAVE GIVEN HIM A STERNER WARNING.

IF ONLY I HAD HANDLED IT BETTER.



OF COURSE
THERE WAS
NO SIGN OF A
FIGHT, NO SIGN
OF A STRUGGLE,
NO TRACE OF
THE KILLER.

BUT I
THINK...



IT ISN'T
YOUR
FAULT,
YUMIHARA-
KUN.



GRIT

TERADA-
SAN...

... WAS
MURDERED
BY STEEL
LADY
NANASE.

... I THINK
I WAS
CALLOUS
TOWARD
HIM.

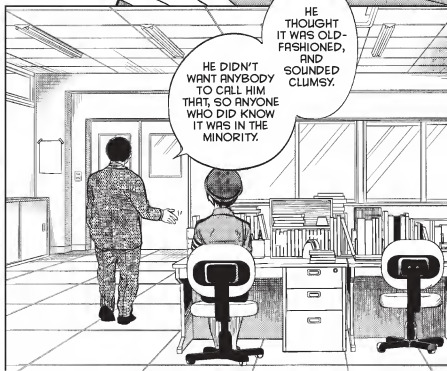


...THAT'S
NOT YOUR
FAULT, EITHER.
TERADA HATED
THAT NAME.



I ONLY
JUST FOUND
OUT DURING
THE INTERRO-
GATION...

...THAT HIS
FIRST NAME
WAS TOKU-
NOSUKE.



HE
THOUGHT
IT WAS OLD-
FASHIONED,
AND
SOUNDED
CLUMSY.

HE DIDN'T
WANT ANYBODY
TO CALL HIM
THAT, SO ANYONE
WHO DID KNOW
IT WAS IN THE
MINORITY.



SNAP

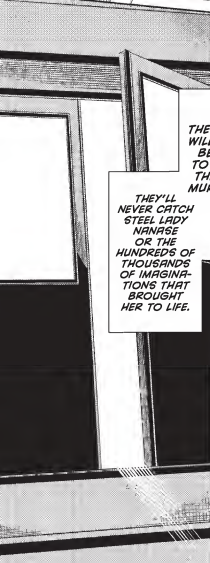
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HE
PROBABLY
RAN INTO
HER IN THE
MIDDLE OF
THE NIGHT...
AND INSTEAD
OF RUNNING,
HE TRIED
TO ARREST
HER.

TERADA-SAN
INTERPRETED
STEEL LADY
NANASE AS A
SIGN THAT A
MAJOR CRIME
WAS ABOUT
TO TAKE
PLACE—

THAT'S WHY
HE WAS INVESTIGAT-
ING HER.



THE POLICE
WILL NEVER
BE ABLE
TO CATCH
THE REAL
MURDERER.

THEY'LL
NEVER CATCH
STEEL LADY
NANASE
OR THE
HUNDREDS OF
THOUSANDS
OF IMAGINA-
TIONS THAT
BROUGHT
HER TO LIFE.



CLACK

7
11

CLACK

7
11



TOCK
3
7

TOCK
3
7

THEN
STEEL
LADY
NANASE
KILLED
HIM.

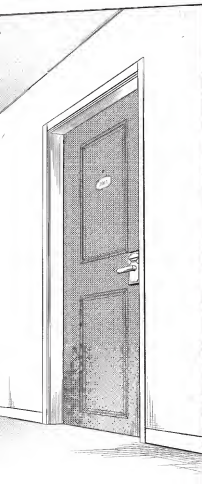
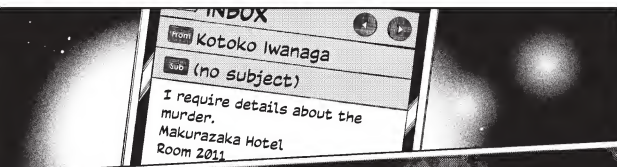
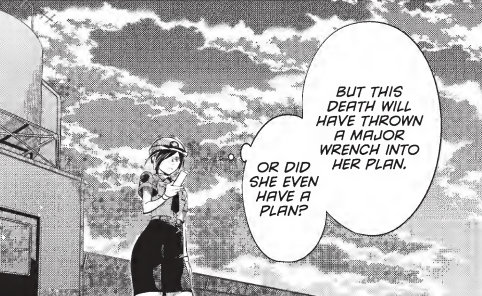


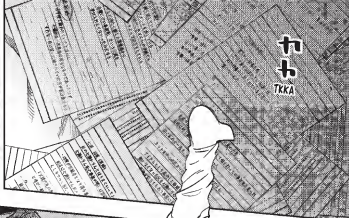
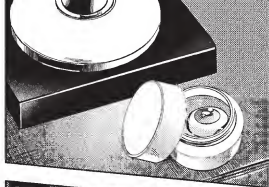
THE CASE
WILL GO
UNSOLVED.

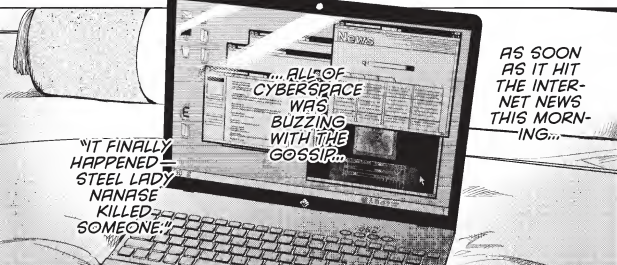
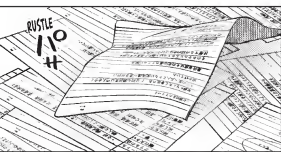


THE ONLY
ONES WHO
CAN BRING
JUSTICE
TO THAT
MONSTER...

...ARE
THOSE
WHO KNOW
THE TRUTH
AND HAVE
THE POWER
TO DEAL
WITH IT.





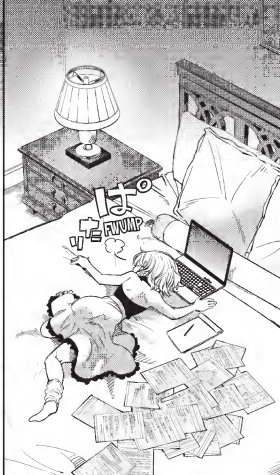




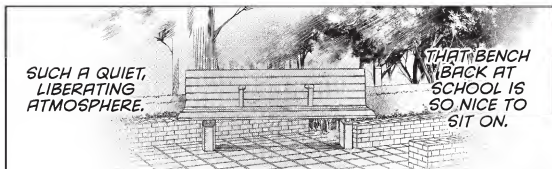
WHEN WAS
THE LAST
TIME IT
RAINED?



I'M
SLEEPY...

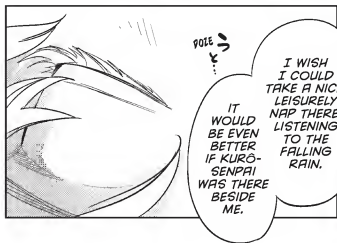


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FWUMP



SUCH A QUIET,
LIBERATING
ATMOSPHERE.

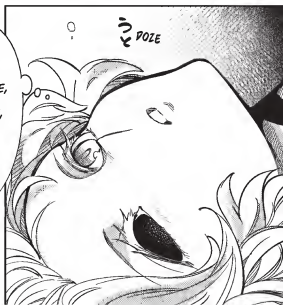
THAT BENCH
BACK AT
SCHOOL IS
SO NICE TO
SIT ON.



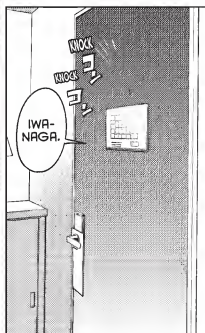
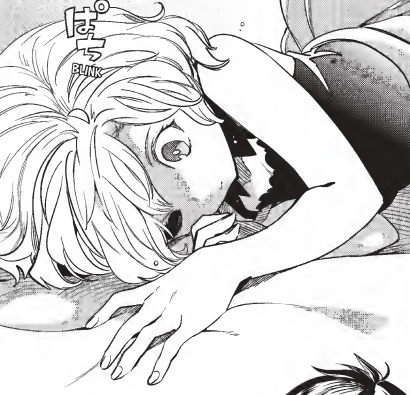
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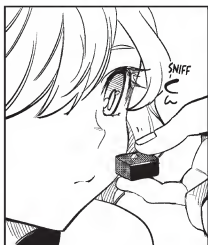
IT
WOULD
BE EVEN
BETTER
IF KURŌ-
SENPAI
WAS THERE
BESIDE
ME.

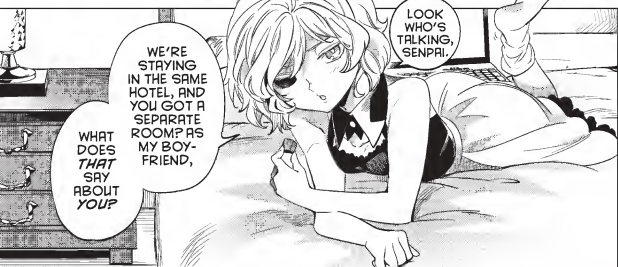
I WISH
I COULD
TAKE A NICE,
LEISURELY
NAP THERE,
LISTENING
TO THE
FALLING
RAIN.

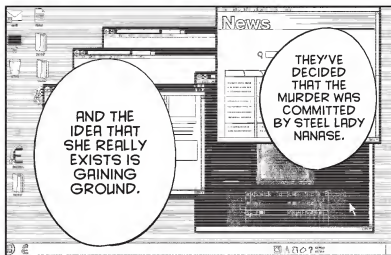
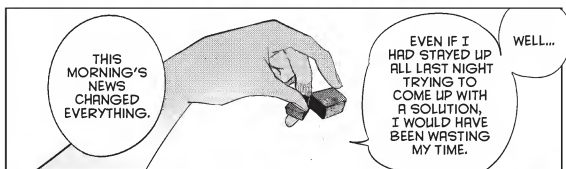


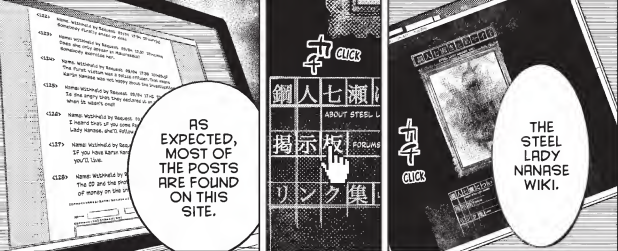
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SPORTS NEWS



...YOU FIND OUT THAT HE ONCE ALMOST MADE IT ONTO THE OLYMPIC JUDO TEAM.

Tokunosuke Terada

IF YOU DO A SEARCH ON THE VICTIM'S NAME...



TKKA
TKKA
TKKA
TKKA

Tokunosuke Ter

Ter
Terada
Terrace

Select with Tab

Search

Somebody finally ended up dead.

<123> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 17:37 ID:nmndmg
Does she only appear in Hakurazaka?
Somebody exorcise her.

CLICK

<124> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 17:41 ID:h6SufJ
The first victim was a police officer. That means Karin Nanase was not happy about the investigation!

<125> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 17:42 ID:ds...
Is she angry that they declared it an accident when it wasn't one?

CLICK

<126> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 17:45 ID:ms...
I heard that if you come face to face with Lady Nanase, she'll follow you forever.

<127> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 17:56 ID:ms...
If you have Karin Nanase's CD or photo book, you'll live.

<128> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 17:59 ID:ms...
The CD and the photo book are both going for a lot of money on the internet.

THE FORUMS ARE ABUZZ WITH SPECULATION AND RUMORS ABOUT DETECTIVE TERADA'S DEATH.

A CHAMPION MARTIAL ARTIST, BEATEN TO DEATH WITHOUT ANY SIGNS OF A STRUGGLE.

IT'S SO WEIRD, IT'S EASY TO ASSUME IT WAS STEEL LADY NANASE.

MM-HM.

IT'S TRUE, THOSE BREASTS WERE AMAZINGLY BOUNCY.

<129> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 18:00 ID:rsyy7a
I don't care if she is a ghost—I just want to grab me some Nanase titties.

CLICK

<130> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 18:02 ID:amsknh
You'll be beaten to death before you get to see them.

<131> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 18:04 ID:msknh
But I'll die happy.



THERE'S EVEN SOME EXCITEMENT ABOUT KARIN NANASE'S BREASTS.

<132> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 18:04 ID:6trPygun
Nice rack.

<133> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 18:05 ID:h76lufg
Give us more!



YOU'VE
TOUCHED
THEM?



GNN

YOU JUST...
GRABBED
THEM WHEN
YOU WERE
GRAPPLING
WITH HER?

I DIDN'T
EXACTLY
HAVE TIME
FOR THAT.



BAH



IF BREASTS
WERE THAT BIG
A PRIORITY FOR
ME, I WOULDN'T
HAVE DATED
YOU OR SAKI-
SAN.

YOU
EASILY
HAD
TIME!

IT WOULD
HAVE BEEN
SIMPLE—ALL
YOU HAD TO DO
WAS CHOOSE A
FUTURE WHERE
YOU WERE
TOUCHING
THEM!



JUST ONCE
IN YOUR LIFE,
YOU MIGHT
WANT TO
FEEL THOSE
LUMPS OF
FAT THAT
ARE THE
EXCLUSIVE
PRIVILEGE
OF CHOSEN
WOMEN!

RUMBLE

RUMBLE



SOMETIMES
YOU
MIGHT
WANT
TO TRY
SOME-
THING
NEW.

RUMBLE

RUMBLE



WELL,
ANYWAY...



WHY ARE
YOU SO
OBSESSED
WITH THIS?



OR ARE YOU
SAYING THAT
YOU COULD
SWEAR TO
THE GREAT
AMATERASU
THAT YOU
HAVE NEVER
HARBORED
SUCH
WICKED
DESIRES?!

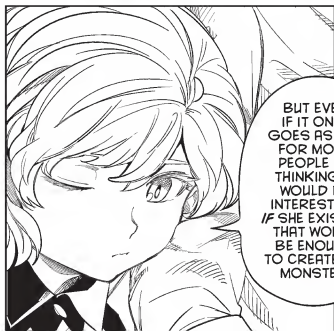


MEAN-
WHILE, MORE
PEOPLE
SPEAK
OUT IN
FAVOR
OF THE
GHOST
THEORY.

...BUT I'M
HAVING A
HARD TIME
FINDING A WAY
TO REDIRECT
THE CURRENT TO
MAKE EVERYONE
THINK STEEL
LADY NANASE
IS JUST A
RUMOR.

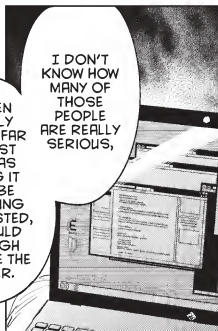
PEOPLE
ARE
REPOSTING
AND
ANALYZING
THE
DETAILS...

...OF KARIN
NANASE'S
ACCIDENT
AND THE
VARIOUS
REACTIONS
THAT CAME
FOR A WHILE
THEREAFTER...



BUT EVEN
IF IT ONLY
GOES AS FAR
FOR MOST
PEOPLE AS
THINKING IT
WOULD BE
INTERESTING
IF SHE EXISTED,
THAT WOULD
BE ENOUGH
TO CREATE THE
MONSTER.

I DON'T
KNOW HOW
MANY OF
THOSE
PEOPLE
ARE REALLY
SERIOUS,



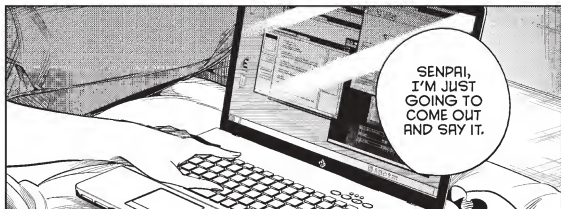


...KEEPS SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING THE GHOST THEORY.

AND THIS ISN'T THE ONLY TIME. EVER SINCE THE RUMORS ABOUT STEEL LADY NANASE FIRST STARTED SPREADING, THE CURRENT OF THOUGHT...

THE SCALES ARE LEANING TOO HEAVILY ON ONE SIDE.



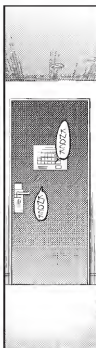
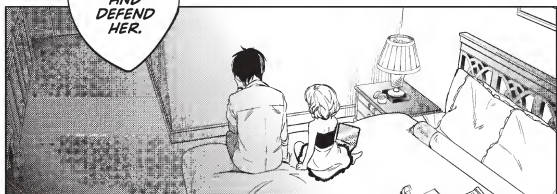


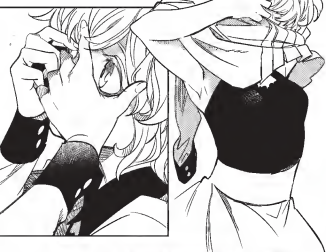


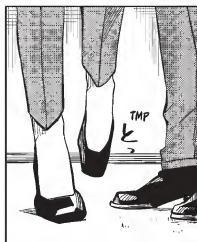
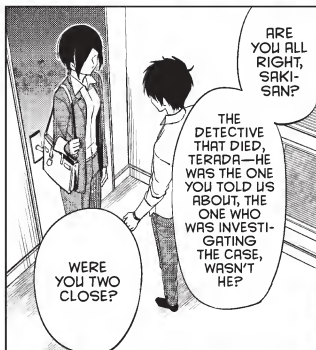
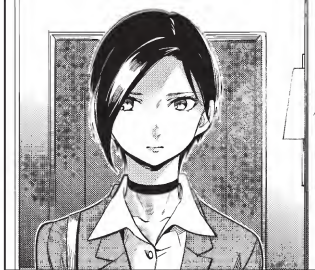
**RIKKA-
SAN IS
ACTIVELY
INVOLVED
IN THIS
CASE.**



**RATHER,
SHE'S THE
CENTER
OF IT.**









YES.



SO I
ASSUME
IT'S SAFE
TO SAY...

...THAT
IT WAS
STEEL LADY
NANASE
WHO KILLED
TERADA-
SAN?

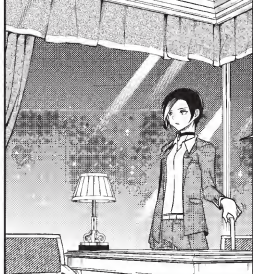


A
SPECTRE
SAW THE
EVENT...



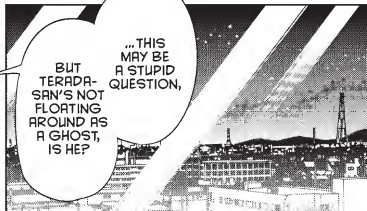
...AND CAME
TO ME THIS
MORNING TO
GIVE ME AN
EYE-WITNESS
REPORT.

DETECTIVE
TERADA WAS
KILLED BY
STEEL LADY
NANASE.



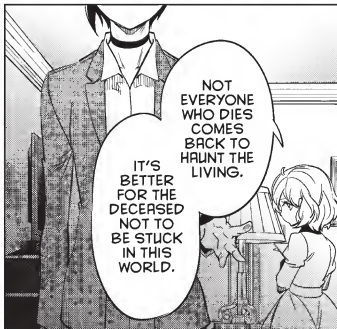
BUT
TERADA-
SAN'S NOT
FLOATING
AROUND AS
A GHOST,
IS HE?

...THIS
MAY BE
A STUPID
QUESTION,



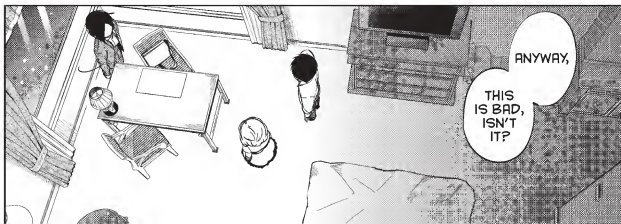
I KNEW
IT WAS A
STUPID
QUESTION.

YES.



NOT
EVERYONE
WHO DIES
COMES
BACK TO
HAUNT THE
LIVING.

IT'S
BETTER
FOR THE
DECEASED
NOT TO
BE STUCK
IN THIS
WORLD.



ANYWAY,

THIS
IS BAD,
ISN'T
IT?

A BODY WITH A
SMASHED FACE?

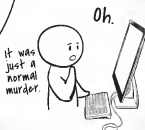
COULD
IT BE...?



AT FIRST,
EVERYONE
WOULD BE
TALKING
ABOUT IT,
DYING TO
KNOW IF IT
WAS STEEL
LADY NANASE,
BUT THEN...

IF AN
AVERAGE,
ORDINARY
HUMAN WERE
ARRESTED,
EVERYONE
WOULD KNOW
THAT SHE
DIDN'T DO IT.

AND THE
EXCITE-
MENT
WOULD
DIE
DOWN
INSTANT-
LY.



YES.

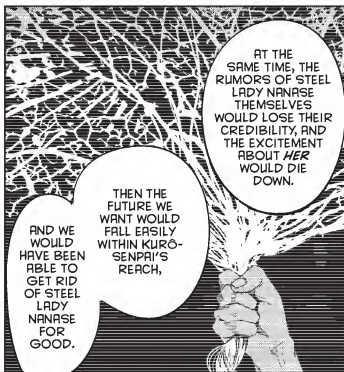
ACTUALLY,
IF THERE
WERE A
MURDER AND
IT *WASN'T*
STEEL LADY
NANASE, THAT
WOULD HAVE
BEEN PERFECT
FOR US.

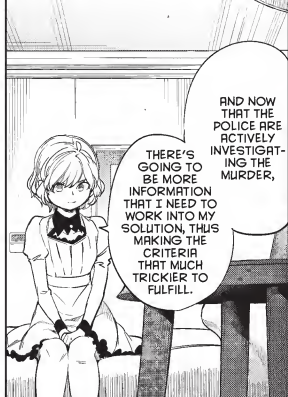


AT THE
SAME TIME, THE
RUMORS OF STEEL
LADY NANASE
THEMSELVES
WOULD LOSE THEIR
CREDIBILITY, AND
THE EXCITEMENT
ABOUT *HER*
WOULD DIE
DOWN.

THEN THE
FUTURE WE
WANT WOULD
FALL EASILY
WITHIN KURŌ-
SENPAI'S
REACH,

AND WE
WOULD
HAVE BEEN
ABLE TO
GET RID
OF STEEL
LADY
NANASE
FOR
GOOD.



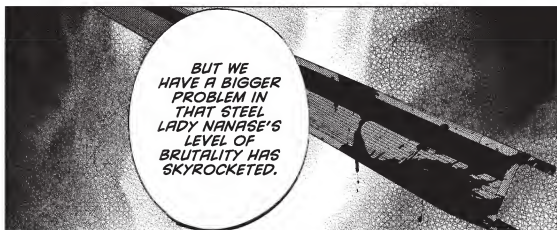


THERE'S GOING TO BE MORE INFORMATION THAT I NEED TO WORK INTO MY SOLUTION, THUS MAKING THE CRITERIA THAT MUCH TRICKIER TO FULFILL.

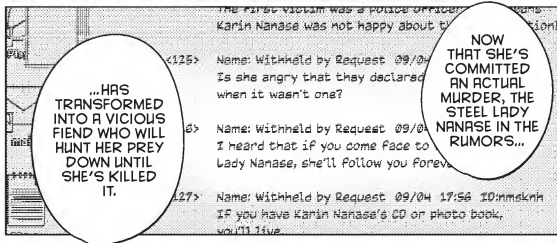
AND NOW THAT THE POLICE ARE ACTIVELY INVESTIGATING THE MURDER,



BUT HE REALLY WAS KILLED BY STEEL LADY NANASE.



BUT WE HAVE A BIGGER PROBLEM IN THAT STEEL LADY NANASE'S LEVEL OF BRUTALITY HAS SKYROCKETED.



...HAS TRANSFORMED INTO A VICIOUS FIEND WHO WILL HUNT HER PREY DOWN UNTIL SHE'S KILLED IT.

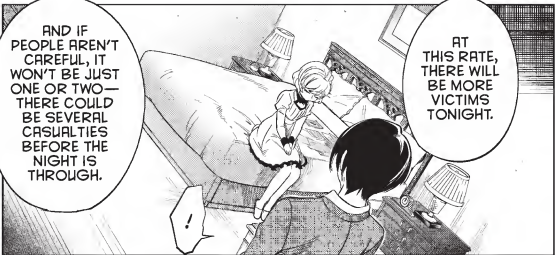
The first victim was a police officer. Karin Nanase was not happy about the situation.

<125> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04
Is she angry that they declared when it wasn't one?

<6> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04
I heard that if you come face to Lady Nanase, she'll follow you forever.

<127> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 17:56 ID:nmsknh
If you have Karin Nanase's CD or photo book, you'll live.

NOW THAT SHE'S COMMITTED AN ACTUAL MURDER, THE STEEL LADY NANASE IN THE RUMORS...

A black and white manga panel showing a man and a woman in a hotel room. The woman is sitting on the edge of a bed, looking towards the man who is standing and looking out a window. There are bedside lamps and a dresser in the room.

AND IF
PEOPLE AREN'T
CAREFUL, IT
WON'T BE JUST
ONE OR TWO—
THERE COULD
BE SEVERAL
CASUALTIES
BEFORE THE
NIGHT IS
THROUGH.

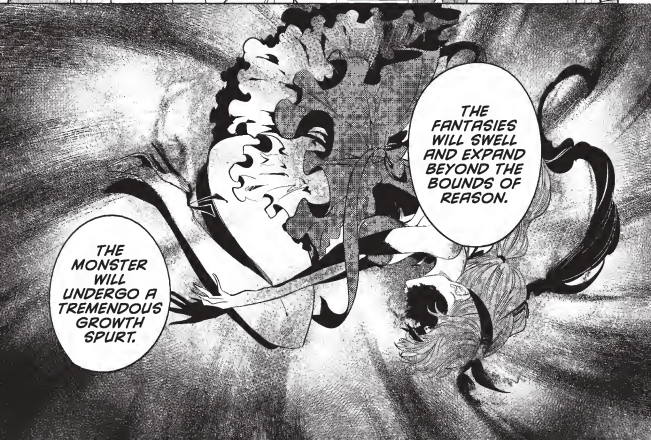
AT
THIS RATE,
THERE WILL
BE MORE
VICTIMS
TONIGHT.

A black and white manga panel showing a woman from behind, looking out a window. She has short, wavy hair. The window shows a cityscape at night.

PEOPLE
ARE
TALKING
ABOUT
HER ALL
OVER THE
COUNTRY.

NO...

I
DON'T
BELIEVE
IT.

A large black and white manga panel showing a man and a woman in a dark, swirling, and chaotic environment. The woman is in the foreground, looking back over her shoulder with a determined expression. The man is behind her, also looking back. The background is filled with dark, swirling patterns.

THE
MONSTER
WILL
UNDERGO A
TREMENDOUS
GROWTH
SPURT.

THE
FANTASIES
WILL SWELL
AND EXPAND
BEYOND THE
BOUNDS OF
REASON.

Scoop!
After the Urban Legend!!

TV
REPORTERS
TRYING TO
INVESTIGATE
STEEL LADY
NANASE...

...AND
HORDES OF
OCCULT FANS
MAY DESCEND
UPON THE TOWN
EN MASSE.

IF THOSE
GROUPS
RUN INTO
STEEL LADY
NANASE,
THEY'LL BE
MASSA-
CREATED.

AND
THERE ARE
A LOT OF
PLACES WITH
SECURITY
CAMERAS.

EVEN I
HAVE NO
WAY OF
STOPPING
THAT.

IF ONE
OF THEM
CATCHES
A VIDEO
OF HER
AND IT'S
BROADCAST
ACROSS THE
COUNTRY,
EVEN
MORE
PEOPLE
WILL KNOW
ABOUT HER,
AND HER
PRESENCE
WILL GROW
STRONGER.





THEY
MAY CLAIM
THAT THEY
DON'T BELIEVE
IN HER, BUT
THEY'LL STILL
PRAY THAT SHE
WON'T HURT
THEM.

BUT ONCE IT
GETS TO THAT
POINT, PEOPLE
WON'T BE ABLE
TO HELP BEING
AFRAID OF STEEL
LADY NANASE'S
GHOST.



I
SUSPECT
NOT.



THEY'LL
WANT A
POWERED-UP
STEEL LADY
NANASE—
GIANT STEEL
LADY
NANASE.

THE
FANTASIES
WILL BALLOON
OUT OF CONTROL,
AND TRANSFORM
INTO A WISH FOR
A REALITY IN
WHICH STEEL LADY
NANASE GROWS IN
SIZE AND STARTS
WREAKING HAVOC
ACROSS THE
NATION.

THERE'S NO
TELLING HOW
MUCH POWER
THE GHOST
WILL GAIN
AFTER THAT.







TONIGHT
IS THE
NIGHT.



It's
already
past
seven.

AND IT
HAS TO BE
TONIGHT?
WE'RE
REALLY
CUTTING IT
CLOSE.

STEEL
LADY
NANASE
ALWAYS
STARTS TO
APPEAR AT
ABOUT
10 P.M.,
RIGHT?



WE MUST
DEFEAT STEEL
LADY NANASE
BEFORE THIS
NIGHT IS
OVER.



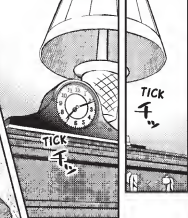
SAKI-
SAN.

THE
INFOR-
MATION,
PLEASE.

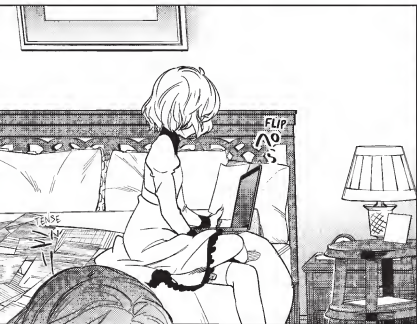


I NEED A
CONSTANT
SUPPLY OF
TRUTH.

TO
CREATE A
RATIONAL
FICTION
THAT CAN
DEFEAT
STEEL
LADY
NANASE,



HOW
FAR HAVE
THE POLICE
GOTTEN
IN THEIR
INVESTIGATION
OF DETECTIVE
TERADA'S
MURDER?

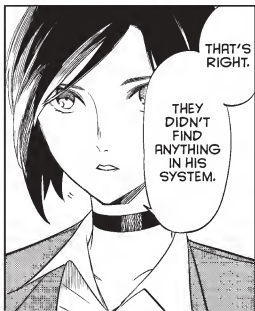




BUT I
GUESS HE'S
ALWAYS
BEEN A
LITTLE IM-
PASSIVE...

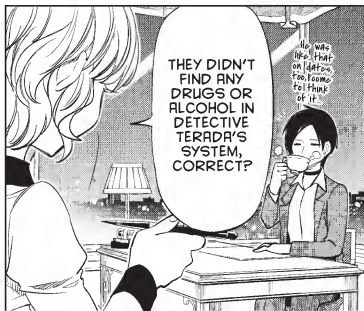


I'M
SURPRISED
HE CAN
ACT SO
NORMAL
IN ALL OF
THIS.



THAT'S
RIGHT.

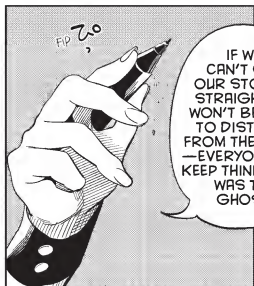
THEY
DIDN'T
FIND
ANYTHING
IN HIS
SYSTEM.



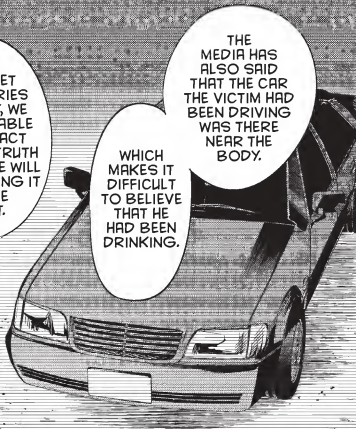
THEY DIDN'T
FIND ANY
DRUGS OR
ALCOHOL IN
DETECTIVE
TERADA'S
SYSTEM,
CORRECT?

He was
like that
on dates,
for some
to think
of it



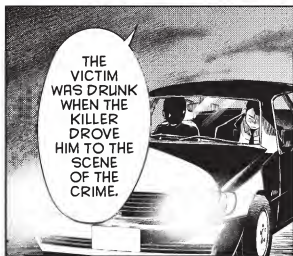


IF WE CAN'T GET OUR STORIES STRAIGHT, WE WON'T BE ABLE TO DISTRACT FROM THE TRUTH—EVERYONE WILL KEEP THINKING IT WAS THE GHOST.



THE MEDIA HAS ALSO SAID THAT THE CAR THE VICTIM HAD BEEN DRIVING WAS THERE NEAR THE BODY.

WHICH MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT HE HAD BEEN DRINKING.



THE VICTIM WAS DRUNK WHEN THE KILLER DROVE HIM TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME.

ACTIVE
DUTY
POLICE
OFFICER

FIFTH
DEGREE
BLACK
BELT IN
JUDO

HOW COULD THE KILLER BLUDGEON DETECTIVE TERADA WITHOUT A FIGHT?

THE FACT THAT WE NOW HAVE TO EXPLAIN THAT HAS PUT US IN QUITE A TIGHT SPOT.



~~PASSENGER
IN THE CAR~~

~~UNDER THE
INFLUENCE~~

IT'S NOT
AN ENTIRELY
USELESS STORY,
BUT THE TWO
ELEMENTS THAT
DIFFER FROM THE
FACTS WILL BE A
DOUBLE-EDGED
SWORD.

...WHICH
I GUESS
MAKES
SENSE,
SINCE SHE
WAS THE
KILLER.

ALL OF
THE FACTS
POINT TO
STEEL LADY
NANASE AS
THE KILLER...

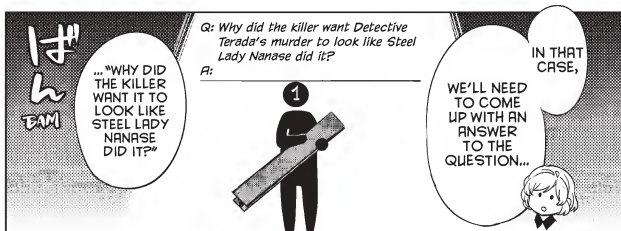
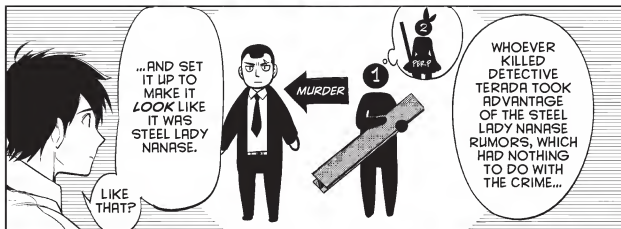
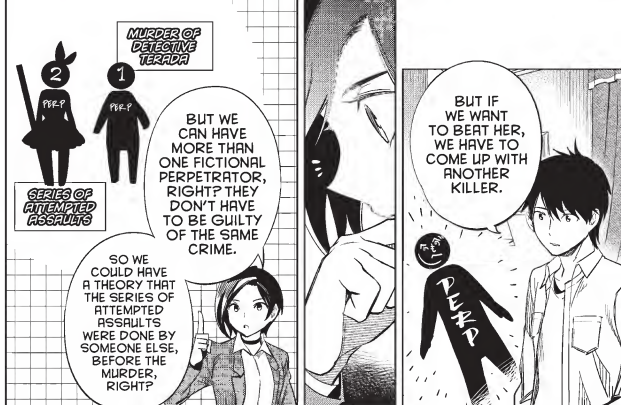
THEN
THEY LAY THE
VICTIM ON
THE GROUND,
HIT HIM IN THE
FACE, AND
LEFT ON FOOT,
LEAVING THE
CAR BEHIND.

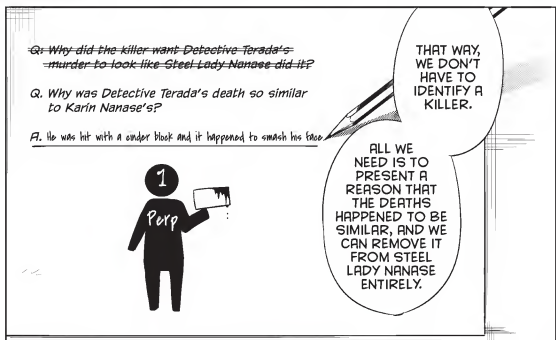
OR IS
THAT NOT
CON-
VINCING
ENOUGH?

WE DON'T
KNOW HOW
MUCH OF
THE POLICE
INFORMATION
WILL REACH
THE
PUBLIC,

BUT
WE DON'T
WANT TO
WRITE A
SCENARIO
THAT'S
GOING TO
FALL APART
THE SECOND
THOSE FACTS
COME TO
LIGHT.

RUFFLE





Q. What was the motive behind the attempted assaults rumored to be committed by Steel Lady Nanase?

A. _____

**SERIES OF
ATTEMPTED
ASSAULTS**



THEN ALL WE
HAVE TO DO
IS EXPLAIN THE
MOTIVE BEHIND
THE ATTEMPTED
ASSAULTS, AND
IT OPENS UP A
WHOLE WORLD
OF POSSIBLE
THEORIES.

Q. Why was Detective Terada's death so similar to Karin Nanase's?

A. He was hit with a sander block and it happened to smash his face



**DETECTIVE
TERADA'S
KILLER**

RUFFLE

HMMM...

RUFFLE

THAT IS
A REALISTIC
WAY TO
HANDLE IT,
FOLLOWING
THE "DIVIDE
EACH
DIFFICULTY"
RULE.

BUT I
DOUBT IT
WILL BE
POSSIBLE TO
COMPLETELY
SEPARATE
THE TWO.



...IS GOING TO BE A DIS-APPOINTMENT COMPARED TO THE IDEA THAT THE ONE CASE INEVITABLY LED TO THE OTHER.

NO MATTER HOW YOU SPIN IT, INTERPRETING THEM AS A TOTAL COINCIDENCE...

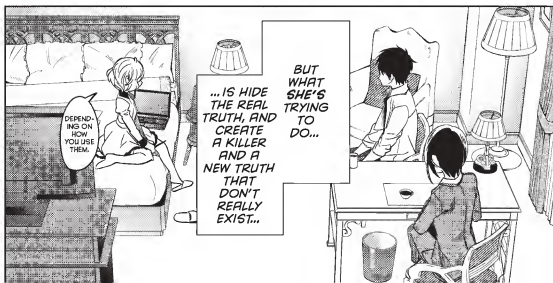


PEOPLE WANT THEIR STORIES TO BE EXCITING, AND THEY START TO HOPE FOR THAT EXCITEMENT IN THEIR REAL LIVES.



COINCIDENCES CAN BE INTERESTING, TOO.

WITH A REAL MYSTERY, WE JUST NEED ALL THE RIGHT FACTS AND SOME DEDUCTIVE REASONING, AND THE TRUTH WOULD COME TO LIGHT.



DEPEND-ING ON HOW YOU USE THEM.

...IS HIDE THE REAL TRUTH, AND CREATE A KILLER AND A NEW TRUTH THAT DON'T REALLY EXIST...

BUT WHAT SHE'S TRYING TO DO...

...TO DERIVE
AN ANSWER
THAT WILL
MAKE PEOPLE
LOOK AT ALL
THE PIECES
OF THE
HYPOTHESIS
AND THINK,
"OH, THAT
MIGHT
EXPLAIN IT."

THERE
ARE SOME
COINCIDENCES
THAT PEOPLE WANT,
SOME THAT PEOPLE
THINK WOULD BE
INTERESTING, AND
SOME THAT WOULD
TAKE THE FUN OUT
OF EVERYTHING.

AND WHEN
IT COMES
TO STEEL LADY
NANASE, NOBODY
WANTS TO HEAR
THAT THE TWO
CASES ACTUALLY
HAD NOTHING TO
DO WITH EACH
OTHER.

AND TO FIND
THAT ANSWER,
WHAT SHE
NEEDS IS NOT
DEDUCTIVE
REASONING...
IT'S SOME-
THING ELSE.

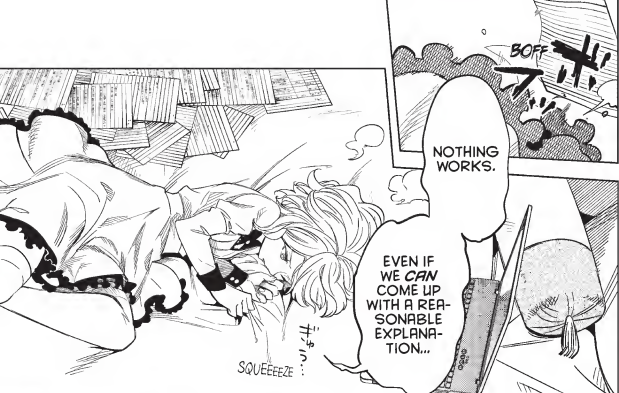
I'll just
have to
stay
parallel
with it
then.

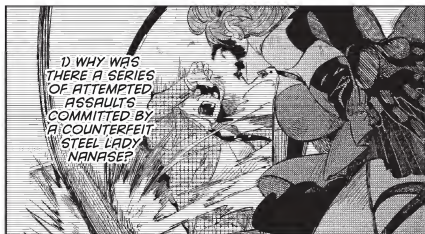
NO, THIS
ISN'T DE-
DUCTIVE
REASON-
ING.

IT'S
WIT.

Do not
cross this
bridge.

Oh, dear,
what a
problem

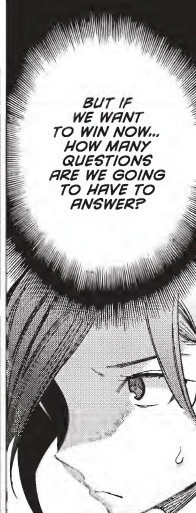




1) WHY WAS
THERE A SERIES
OF ATTEMPTED
ASSAULTS
COMMITTED BY
A COUNTERFEIT
STEEL LADY
NANASE?



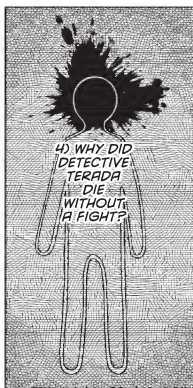
2) WHO
IS BEHIND
THEM?



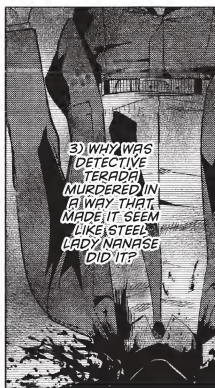
BUT IF
WE WANT
TO WIN NOW...
HOW MANY
QUESTIONS
ARE WE GOING
TO HAVE TO
ANSWER?



5) WHO
KILLED
DETECTIVE
TERADA?



4) WHY DID
DETECTIVE
TERADA
DIE
WITHOUT
A FIGHT?



3) WHY WAS
DETECTIVE
TERADA
MURDERED IN
A WAY THAT
MADE IT SEEM
LIKE STEEL
LADY NANASE
DID IT?

WE'RE
CHAINED
DOWN BY
THE FACT
THAT THOSE
ANSWERS
WOULD BE
LIES.



BUT OUR
PROBLEM
IS MORE
THAN JUST
ANSWERING
THE
QUESTIONS.



~~FALSE
CHARGES~~



~~ARREST~~



AND ON
TOP OF
THAT, WE
HAVE TO
GET A LOT
OF PEOPLE
TO AGREE
WITH OUR
SOLUTION.

WE CAN'T
CAUSE HEAVY
DAMAGE TO
ANY REAL
PERSON BY
ACCUSING
THEM.

WE CAN'T
LEAD THE
POLICE
TO
ARREST
ANYONE.

...CAN
WE GET
RID OF
STEEL
LADY
NANASE?

IF WE CAN
CLEAR ALL
THOSE
HURDLES...







STEEL LADY
NANASE
WASN'T
BUILT IN A
DAY.

IT WOULD
HAVE TAKEN A
LOT OF TRIAL
AND ERROR
TO GET HER
STRONG
ENOUGH TO
KILL PEOPLE.

あ
RISE?

...AND FILL IT
WITH POSTS
AND TOPICS
TO CATCH
PEOPLE'S
ATTENTION.

YOU START
A RUMOR,
CREATE A
WEBSITE...

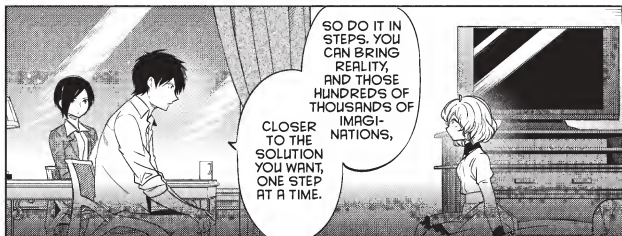
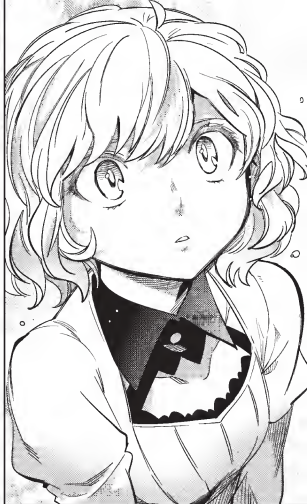


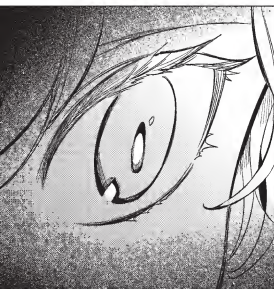
...?

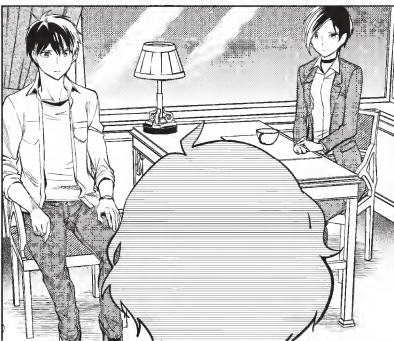
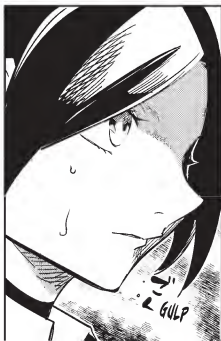
OTHERWISE,
WE NEVER
WOULD HAVE
REACHED THIS
REALITY WHERE
AN IMAGINARY
MONSTER WAS
CREATED IN
SUCH A SHORT
PERIOD OF
TIME.

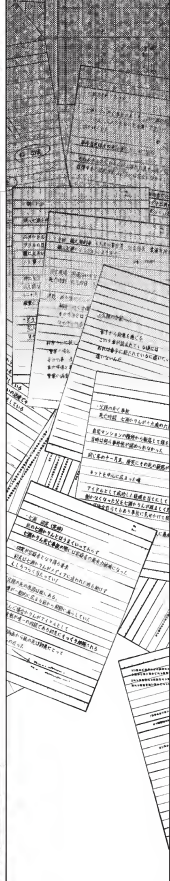
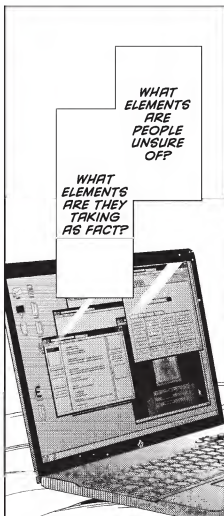
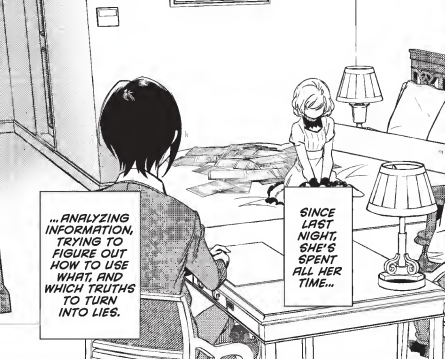
IT WOULD
HAVE TAKEN
MANY DIFFERENT
TRICKS TO KEEP
THE TOPICS
COMING AND
STOP PEOPLE
FROM MOVING
ON TO OTHER
INTERESTS.











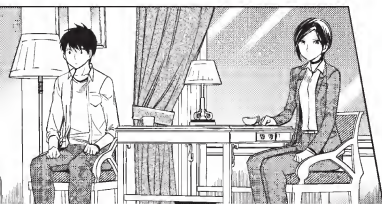
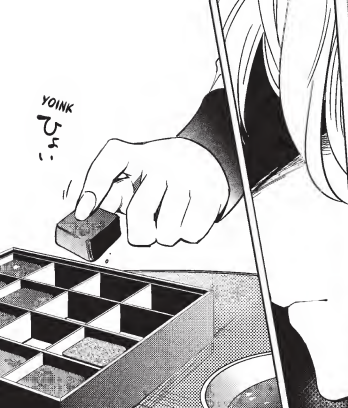


PUTTING
TOGETHER
THE
DISTORTED
BLOCKS
THAT EXIST
IN REALITY...

...AND
TRYING
TO FIGURE
OUT HOW
TO CREATE
A PAST
THAT NEVER
HAPPENED.

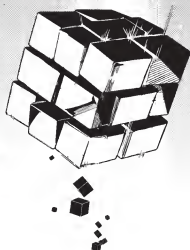
IT'S A
TASK MORE
UNFORGIVING
THAN
SEARCHING
FOR THE
TRUTH,
AND MORE
RIDICULOUS.

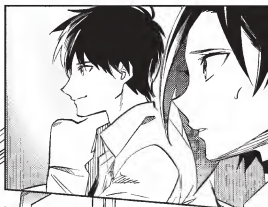
SHE'S
AT WORK
CONSTRUCTING
AN EMPTY
FICTION.



AND
RIGHT
NOW...

... SHE IS
TRYING
TO
COMPLETE
IT.

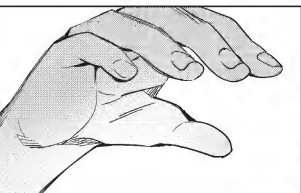


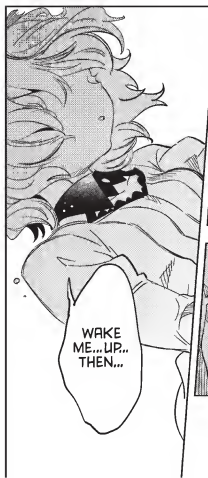
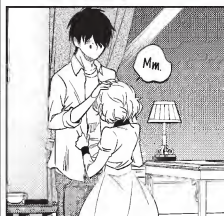




**STEEL
LADY
NANASE,**

**TONIGHT
WILL BE
YOUR
LAST.**

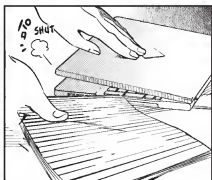


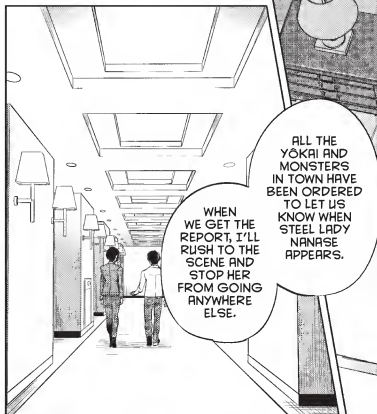




LET'S GET
SOMETHING
READY FOR
IWANAGA TO
EAT WHEN SHE
WAKES UP.

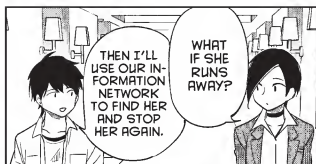
AND
WE'D
BETTER
GET SOME
FOOD FOR
OURSELVES,
TOO.





WHEN
WE GET THE
REPORT, I'LL
RUSH TO THE
SCENE AND
STOP HER
FROM GOING
ANYWHERE
ELSE.

ALL THE
YOKAI AND
MONSTERS
IN TOWN HAVE
BEEN ORDERED
TO LET US
KNOW WHEN
STEEL LADY
NANASE
APPEARS.



THEN I'LL
USE OUR IN-
FORMATION
NETWORK
TO FIND HER
AND STOP
HER AGAIN.

WHAT
IF SHE
RUNS
AWAY?



IT'S OUR
BEST
STRATEGY.

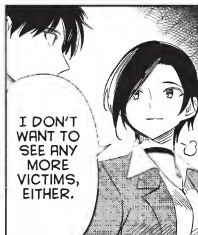
Ha
ha.

THAT'S
A
HASSLE.



I CAN
FIGHT
HER ALL
NIGHT LONG,

SO I
CAN KEEP
HER BUSY
AND MAKE
SURE
THERE
AREN'T
ANY CASU-
ALTIES.





SINCE YOU
STARTED
DATING HER.



NOT
THAT I HAVE
ANY RIGHT
TO COMPLAIN
IF YOU *DID*
START DATING
RIGHT AWAY,
BUT I BELIEVE
THAT YOU
DIDN'T.

I HAD
ABSOLUTELY
NO
INTEREST
IN HER.



RIGHT
AFTER WE
BROKE
UP?

gasp



I MET HER
ABOUT
TWO AND A
HALF YEARS
AGO...



SHE
APPROACHED
ME THAT
MAY.

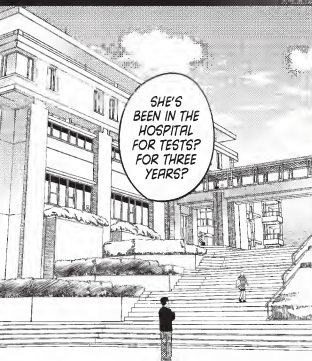
BUT IT'S
NOT LIKE
WE STARTED
DATING
IMMEDIATELY.



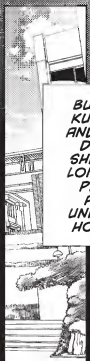


RIKKA
SAKURA-
GAWA.

KURO-
KUN'S
COUSIN,
THREE
YEARS HIS
SENIOR.

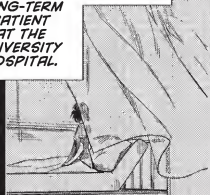


SHE'S
BEEN IN THE
HOSPITAL
FOR TESTS?
FOR THREE
YEARS?



BUT WHEN
KURŌ-KUN
AND I WERE
DATING,
SHE WAS A
LONG-TERM
PATIENT
AT THE
UNIVERSITY
HOSPITAL.

I HEARD
THROUGH
THE GRAPE-
VINE THAT
SHE HAD
PASSED
AWAY,



BUT THIS
COLLEGE IS
CLOSER, SO I
CAN STOP BY
THE HOSPITAL
MORE OFTEN.

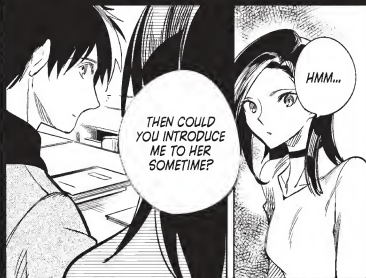
I COULDN'T
COME SEE HER
MUCH WHEN I
WAS IN HIGH
SCHOOL.

YEAH, WELL,
IT'S A LONG
STORY.



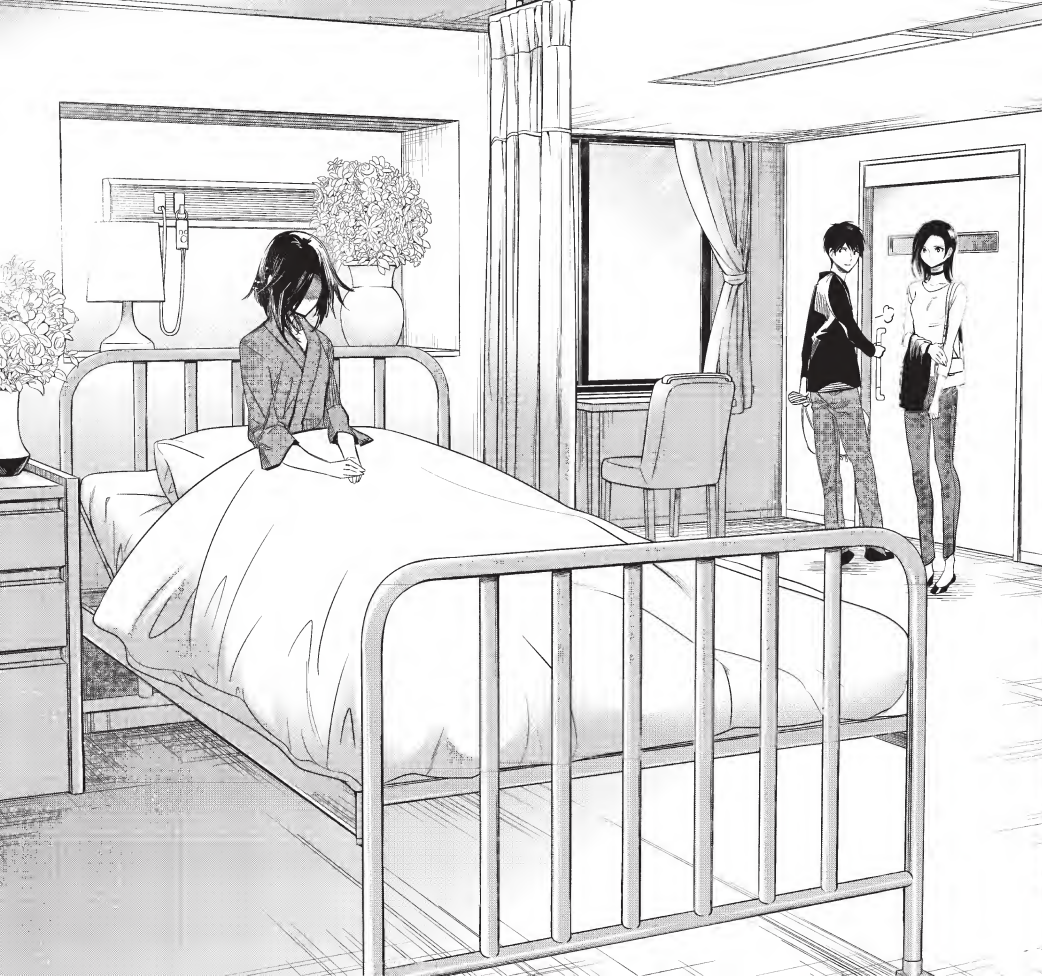
SURE.

I CAN
DO THAT.



HMM...

THEN COULD
YOU INTRODUCE
ME TO HER
SOMETIME?



KNOCK

コノ

Rikka Sakuragawa-sama

KNOCK

コノ

KA-CHAK

カチ

CREAK

カチ



*AND
BEAUTI-
FUL.*

*SHE WAS
LEAN AND
FAIR-
SKINNED.*

IN/SPECTRE

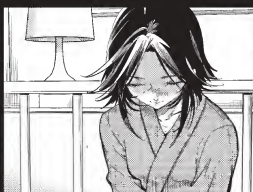
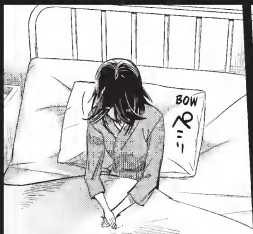
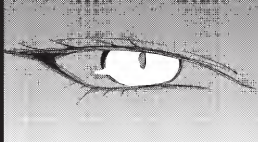




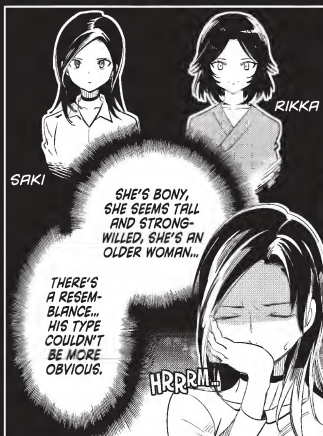
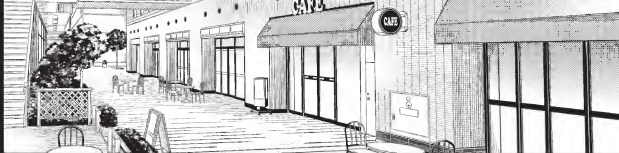
THIS...

...IS
KURŌ-
KUN'S...

E.
ONP







SHE'S BONY,
SHE SEEMS TALL
AND STRONG-
WILLED, SHE'S AN
OLDER WOMAN...

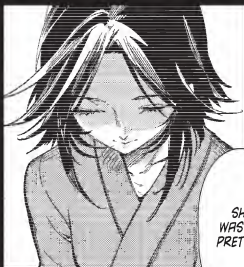
THERE'S
A RESEM-
BLANCE...
HIS TYPE
COULDN'T
BE MORE
OBVIOUS.

HRPRM!



I WAS ALWAYS
WORRIED THAT
I WASN'T CUTE
ENOUGH FOR
KURŌ-KUN.

BUT NOW
I SEE HOW
IT IS.



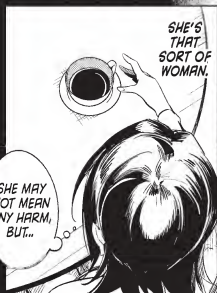
I BET SHE
WAS KURŌ-
KUN'S FIRST
LOVE.

SHE
WAS SO
PRETTY...



BUT...

I
SHOULDN'T
GET TOO
CLOSE TO
HER.



SHE'S
THAT
SORT OF
WOMAN.

SHE MAY
NOT MEAN
ANY HARM,
BUT...



SHE
SEEMS...

...LIKE SHE
SILENTLY,
EVER SO
SILENTLY...

...COR-
RUPTS
HER
SUR-
ROUND-
INGS.



I HEARD THAT
SAKURAGAWA-
SAN WAS
TAKEN TO THE
O.R. AGAIN
YESTERDAY.



MAYBE
IT'S TRUE
THAT SHE
KEEPS
TRYING
TO KILL
HERSELF.

AND
SHE'S SO
THIN—SHE
COULD DIE ANY
SECOND AND I
WOULDN'T BE
THE LEAST BIT
SURPRISED.



ANOTHER
ATTEMPTED
SUICIDE?



THEY SAY
SHE DOESN'T
HAVE MUCH
LONGER.

IT MUST BE
A TERRIBLE
ILLNESS...

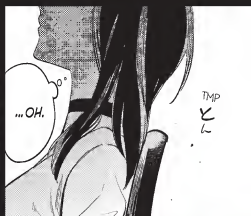
I HEAR
THAT SHE'S
BEEN IN THIS
HOSPITAL
FOR QUITE
SOME TIME.

Well,
you see...



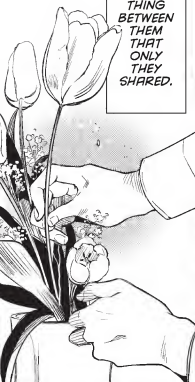
AFTER
THAT, I
WOULD
KILL TIME
IN THE
HOSPITAL
WHILE HE
VISITED
HER.

IF SHE
DOESN'T
HAVE MUCH
LONGER, THEN
I'LL WAIT.



...OH.

TMF
Y
L



THERE WAS SOMETHING BETWEEN THEM THAT ONLY THEY SHARED.



LIKE HE WAS HANDLING SOMETHING FRAGILE, OR LIKE HE WAS TALKING TO HIS MENTOR.



KURŌ-KUN WAS ALWAYS SO POLITE WHEN HE TALKED TO RIKKA-SAN.



IT'S HOLY GROUND. I DON'T WANT TO INTRUDE.



BUT THAT SOMETHING PUT A DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM THAT WOULD NEVER GROW SHORTER.



IN THE
END, I ONLY
EVER SAW
HER ABOUT
FIVE TIMES.



COME ON,
YOU HAD TO
HAVE KNOWN
THAT ABOUT
YOURSELF.



I DON'T
NEED
EXCUSES.



THAT'S
NO REASON
TO ASSUME
THAT I WAS
DATING YOU
BECAUSE
OF...

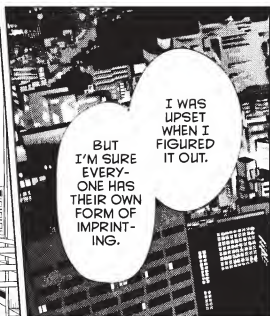


WELL,
MAYBE I
DID, BUT...



AND I
DIDN'T GET THE
FEELING THAT
YOU SAW HER
AS AN OBJECT
OF ROMANTIC
AFFECTION.

IT DIDN'T
SEEM LIKE
YOU WERE
COMPARING
ME TO RIKKA-
SAN.

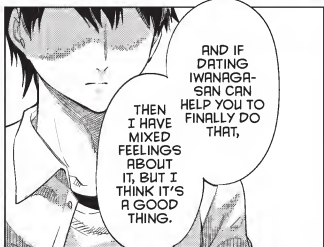


I WAS
UPSET
WHEN I
FIGURED
IT OUT.

BUT
I'M SURE
EVERY-
ONE HAS
THEIR OWN
FORM OF
IMPRINT-
ING.

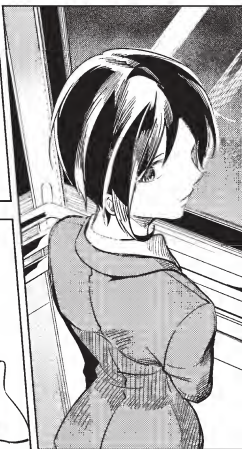


*YOU JUST
COULDN'T
BREAK
FREE OF
HER.*

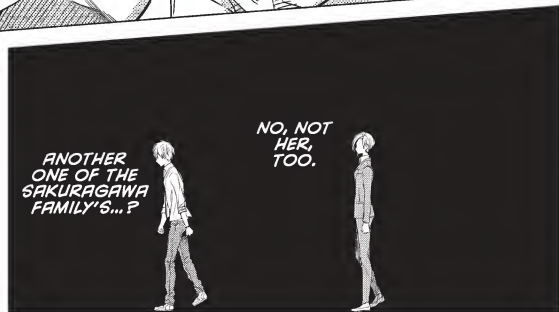


AND IF
DATING
IWANAGA-
SAN CAN
HELP YOU TO
FINALLY DO
THAT,

THEN
I HAVE
MIXED
FEELINGS
ABOUT
IT, BUT I
THINK IT'S
A GOOD
THING.



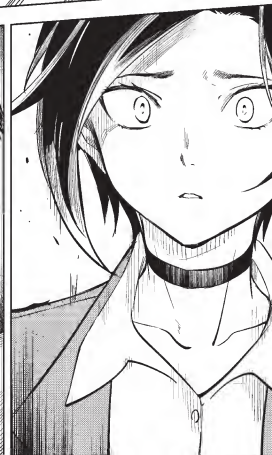


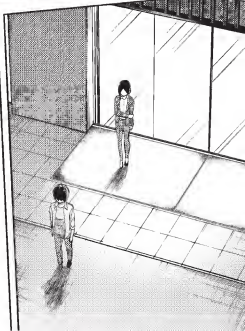
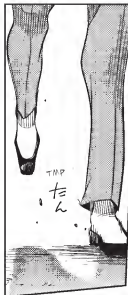
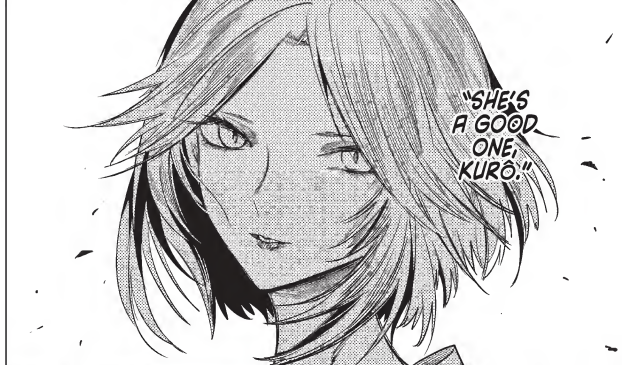


WHAT KIND
OF TESTS
WERE THEY
DOING ON
HER?



WHY WAS
SHE IN THE
HOSPITAL
ALL THOSE
YEARS?





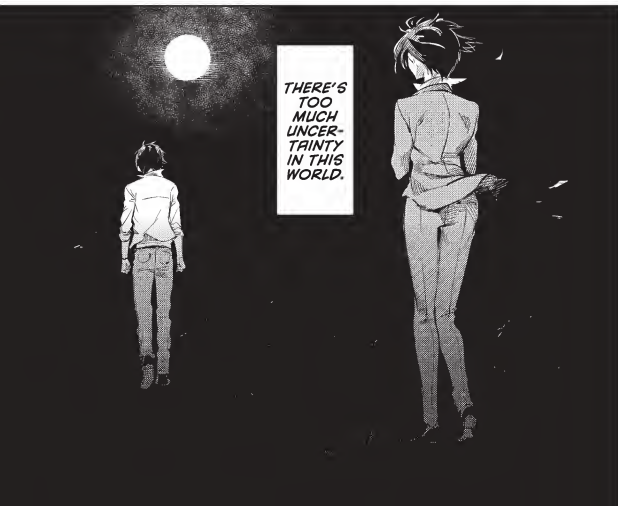
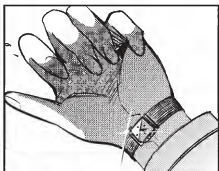


**BUT
IT'S
STILL
DARK.**

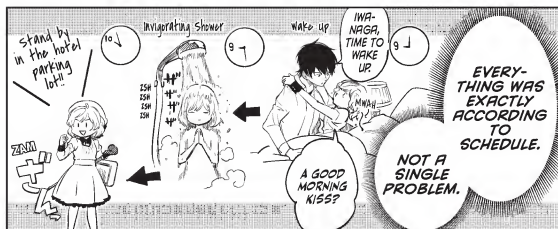


**THE
MOON
IS
RISING.**

**THAT
SHOULD
MAKE IT
EASIER
TO FIND
STEEL
LADY
NANASE.**



**THERE'S
TOO
MUCH
UNCER-
TAINTY
IN THIS
WORLD.**





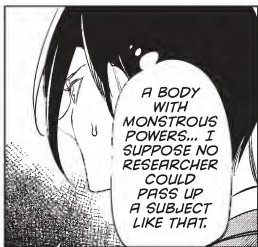
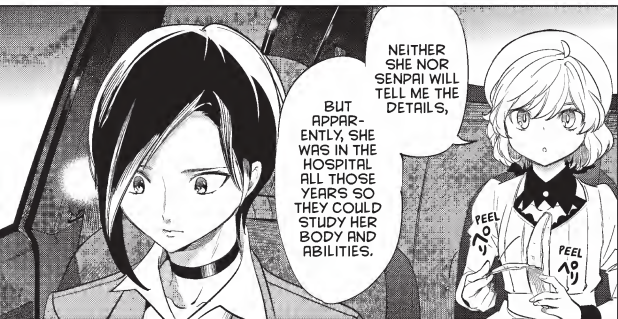


...ALL
KINDS
OF
THINGS.

AND
I DO
MEAN...









I TOLD
YOU, DIDN'T
I? THAT SHE
WAS IN THE
HOSPITAL?



WHAT?



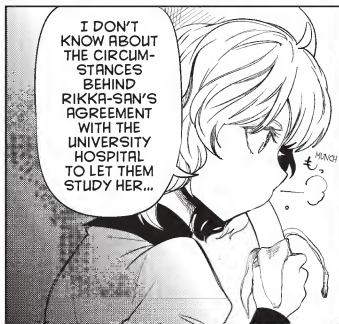
DIDN'T
SHE HAVE
OTHER
OPTIONS,
LIKE KURŌ-
KUN'S
PLACE?



WHY DID
SHE GO
TO YOUR
HOUSE?



AROUND
THE BEGIN-
NING OF THE
YEAR, THEY
RELEASED
HER. JUST
LIKE THAT.

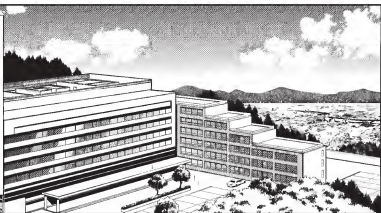


I DON'T
KNOW ABOUT
THE CIRCUM-
STANCES
BEHIND
RIKKA-SAN'S
AGREEMENT
WITH THE
UNIVERSITY
HOSPITAL
TO LET THEM
STUDY HER...



DO YOU
REALLY THINK
THAT, I, HIS
GIRLFRIEND,
COULD LET
KURŌ-SENPAI
SHARE A ROOF
WITH HER?

...BUT HER RELEASE,
APPARENTLY, WAS
DECIDED BY A NEW
ADMINISTRATION
AND THE POLITICAL
CHANGES THAT
CAME WITH IT.



A LOT OF
DOCTORS
WOULD
HAVE
WANTED TO
GET RID
OF HER.

BECAUSE
EVEN
WITHIN THE
HOSPITAL,
NO ONE
REALLY HAD
ANY IDEA
WHAT TO DO
WITH HER.

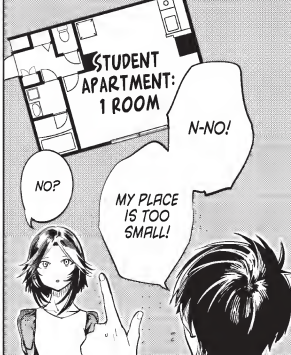
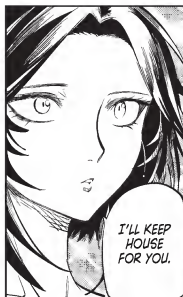
SO
THERE
WERE
POLITICS
AND
TENSION,

AND THEN
THE RUMORS
STARTED
CIRCULATING
THAT
RIKKA-SAN
WOULDN'T
LAST MUCH
LONGER.

Rikka Sakuragawa-sam















AND YET,
NOT ONLY ARE
YOU ON THE
PHONE, BUT YOU
SAY YOU HAVE A
FAVOR TO ASK.

THIS IS NO
ORDINARY
MATTER.



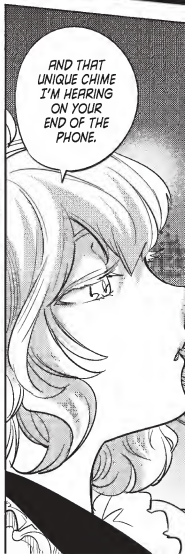
**YOU'RE
AT THE
HOSPITAL.**



IT IS
NOW FIVE
O'CLOCK.
THE FRONT
GATE WILL
BE CLOSING.
ANYONE
RETURNING
HOME...

TAY-
TRÀ-
LA-
LAY

LA-
LAY
TRAY



AND THAT
UNIQUE CHIME
I'M HEARING
ON YOUR
END OF THE
PHONE.



SO YOUR
"FAVOR" MOST
CERTAINLY HAS
SOMETHING TO
DO WITH RIKKA-
SAN.



AND I SUSPECT
THIS IS A
PROBLEM I
AM LIKELY
ABLE TO
SOLVE.



YOU HAVE
FALLEN INTO
DIRE CIRCUM-
STANCES THAT
REQUIRE YOU,
KURŌ-SENPAI,
TO ASK ME TO
HELP RIKKA-
SAN.

ERGO,
IT WOULD
BE MOST
BENEFICIAL
TO ME TO
TAKE A BIT
OF A HARD
STANCE
ON THIS
MATTER.



SIGH

...LET'S
HEAR
IT.



BUT
NOT TO
WORRY.

I WON'T ASK
FOR ANYTHING
TOO DIFFICULT.

GRIN



I WANT A
KEY TO YOUR
APARTMENT.



WHAT IS
UNREASON-
ABLE ABOUT
GIVING YOUR
GIRLFRIEND
A KEY TO
YOUR
HOME?!

DON'T BE UN-
REASONABLE.



AND WOULDN'T
IT BE WONDERFUL
TO HAVE YOUR
GIRLFRIEND KEEP
HOUSE FOR YOU
AND WELCOME
YOU WHEN YOU
COME HOME?

IT'S NOT
LIKE I'M
GOING TO
TRASH THE
PLACE.

YES

SHARED BATH!

Today we'll enhance your virility with some unagi!

SHARED BATH!

WELCOME HOME!

I HAVEN'T CUT ANY CORNERS IN PREPARING YOUR MEALS, YOUR BATH, OR YOUR BED!

SHARED BED

YES
SHARED BED

KEEP...

HOUSE...

WOOF

は!!
BAM
フ



it even
has a
bath.

I'll live
here.

SFF
1/2



LOOK AT
THIS AD
I FOUND,
KURÔ.

WHAT
?!



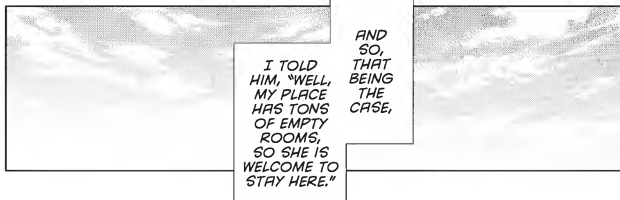
YOU
ARE
NOT.

YOU'VE
MADE ME
SO HAPPY! AT
LAST, I AM YOUR
COMMON-LAW
WIFE!

Oh!

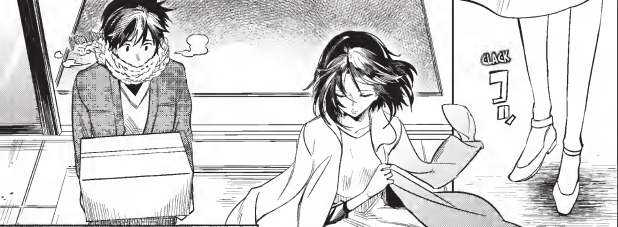
...FINE.

I'll
GIVE YOU
THE KEY.
PLEASE
HELP ME.



I TOLD
HIM, "WELL,
MY PLACE
HAS TONS
OF EMPTY
ROOMS,
SO SHE IS
WELCOME TO
STAY HERE."

AND
SO,
THAT
BEING
THE CASE,



Do we
need this
many
cars?

Kay!

Kay!

I WAS
PRESENT,
AS WELL.



I SENT
CARS TO
FETCH
HER
RIGHT
AWAY,

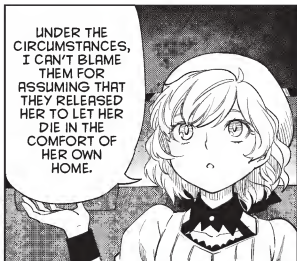
AND
RIKKA-
SAN
VACATED
HER
HOS-
PITAL
ROOM.



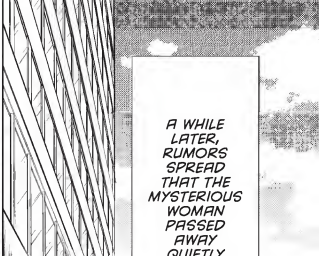
AND, AT
ANY RATE,
SHE WAS
A MYSTERY
PATIENT
WHO HAD
BEEN IN THE
HOSPITAL
FOR MORE
THAN FIVE
YEARS.

SO THE
DOCTORS
AND NURSES
ALL WATCHED
NERVOUSLY AS
SHE DEPARTED,
WONDERING
IF IT WAS
REALLY A
GOOD IDEA TO
LET HER GO.

UNDER THE
CIRCUMSTANCES,
I CAN'T BLAME
THEM FOR
ASSUMING THAT
THEY RELEASED
HER TO LET HER
DIE IN THE
COMFORT OF
HER OWN
HOME.

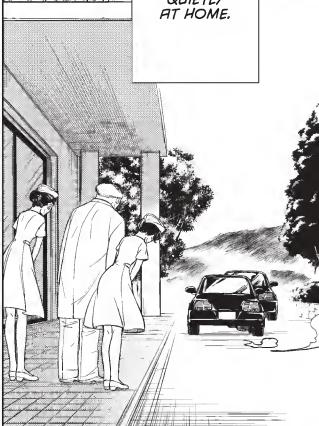


A WHILE
LATER,
RUMORS
SPREAD
THAT THE
MYSTERIOUS
WOMAN
PASSED
AWAY
QUIETLY
AT HOME.



AND
THOSE
RUMORS
MADE IT
ALL THE
WAY TO
ME...

YOU JUST
CAN'T TRUST
GOSSIP,
CAN YOU?



RIKKA-SAN
WAS BEAUTIFUL
AND WELL-
MANNERED
DOWN TO HER
SMALLEST
GESTURE.

MY
PARENTS
WERE
HAPPY
TO HAVE
HER.

NO, YOU
CAN'T. IN
REALITY,
SHE'S FIT AS
A FIDDLE.







KURÔ.

I DON'T
THINK SHE'S
A GOOD
ONE.



WHAT?



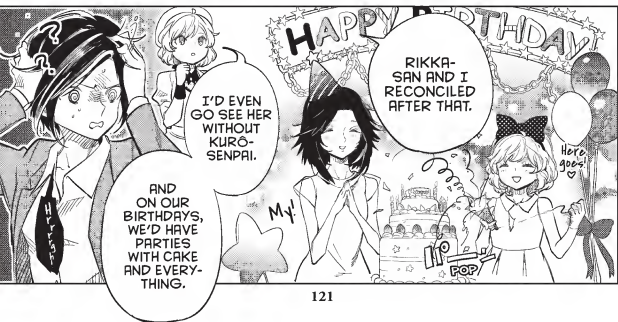
YES.

THAT'S
CRINGE-
WORTHY.

She did
hate
you

AGREED.









I'M SURE
RIKKA-SAN
KNOWS WHAT
SHE'S DOING.

She's a grown
woman.

FOR THE
FIRST
WEEK, HE
DIDN'T
DO ANY-
THING.



HE
LOST HIS
MIND—HE
PUSHED ME
DOWN, AND
THEN, TO
RELIEVE HIS
ANXIETY,
HE MADE
VIOLENT...

GIVE ME
THE REAL
ANSWER.

HEH
HEH
HEH
HEH.



AFTER
TWO WEEKS,
HE STARTED
CALLING EVERY
SINGLE PLACE
HE COULD
THINK OF.



NOW
THEN,
SAKI-
SAN.

A WEEK AGO,
HE SENT ME A
SINGLE EMAIL
AND WENT OFF
TO FIND HER.

Something came up.
Don't look for me.



WHAT
DID YOU
AND SENPAI
TALK ABOUT
WHILE I WAS
ASLEEP?

WHAT IS
IT THAT'S
BOTHERING
YOU?



DON'T
YOU THINK
YOU SHOULD
EXPLAIN TO ME
HOW YOU GOT
HERE BEFORE
I SUMMONED
YOU?

WHAT ABOUT
YOU, MR.
ABANDONS HIS
GIRLFRIEND
AND GOES
AWOL?

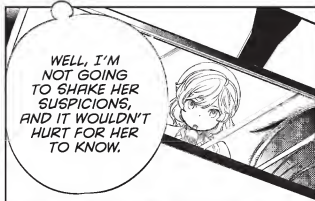


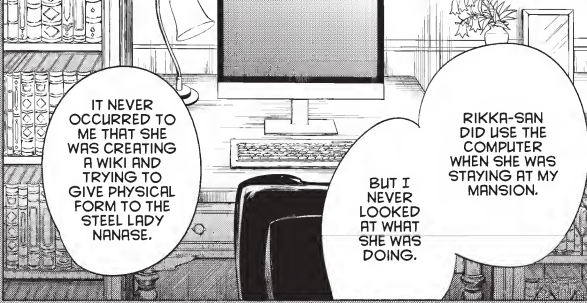
THAT
RIKKA-SAN
WAS BEHIND
STEEL LADY
NANASE.

YOU
KNEW
ALL
ALONG,
DIDN'T
YOU?



NOT
THAT I
DON'T
ALREADY
KNOW.





IT NEVER
OCCURRED TO
ME THAT SHE
WAS CREATING
A WIKI AND
TRYING TO
GIVE PHYSICAL
FORM TO THE
STEEL LADY
NANASE.

BUT I
NEVER
LOOKED
AT WHAT
SHE WAS
DOING.

RIKKA-SAN
DID USE THE
COMPUTER
WHEN SHE WAS
STAYING AT MY
MANSION.



IT WAS
JUST BEFORE
I CAME TO
MAKURAZAKA
CITY THAT I
REALIZED
RIKKA-SAN
WAS
INVOLVED.



...UNTIL THE
SPECTRES
FROM THIS
CITY CAME
TO ME FOR
HELP.

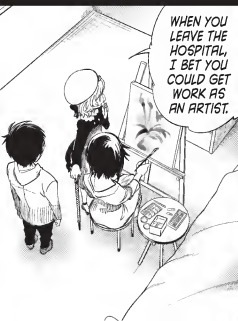
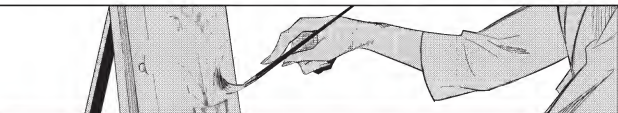
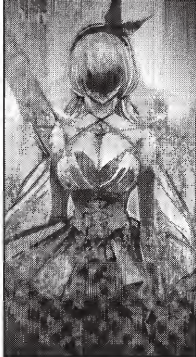
I DIDN'T
EVEN KNOW
STEEL LADY
NANASE
EXISTED...



PICTURE?

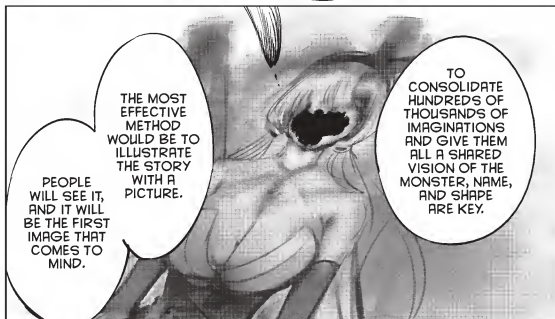


I WAS
DOING
RESEARCH
FOR THE CASE,
AND THE INTER-
NET SEARCH
BROUGHT UP
THE PICTURE
FROM THAT
WIKI.





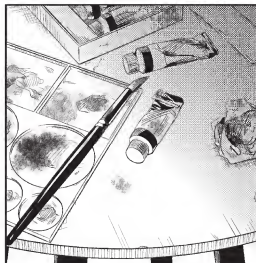
THINKING ABOUT IT, RIKKA-SAN HAD PROBABLY ALREADY STARTED PLOTTING TO BRING AN IMAGINARY MONSTER TO LIFE.



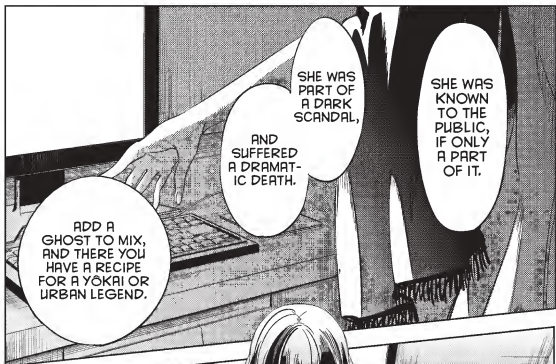
PEOPLE WILL SEE IT, AND IT WILL BE THE FIRST IMAGE THAT COMES TO MIND.

THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHOD WOULD BE TO ILLUSTRATE THE STORY WITH A PICTURE.

TO CONSOLIDATE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF IMAGINATIONS AND GIVE THEM ALL A SHARED VISION OF THE MONSTER, NAME, AND SHAPE ARE KEY.



KARIN NANASE'S ACCIDENT WOULD HAVE GIVEN HER THE PERFECT MATERIAL.



ADD A
GHOST TO MIX,
AND THERE YOU
HAVE A RECIPE
FOR A YÖKAI OR
URBAN LEGEND.

AND
SUFFERED
A DRAMAT-
IC DEATH.

SHE WAS
PART OF
A DARK
SCANDAL,

SHE WAS
KNOWN
TO THE
PUBLIC,
IF ONLY
A PART
OF IT.



...AND THE
ACCOMPANY-
ING STORIES
ALL CAME
FROM RIKKA-
SAN, AS
WELL.

I SUSPECT
THE NAME
"STEEL LADY
NANASE"...



THERE MAY
HAVE BEEN
RUMORS ABOUT
KARIN NANASE'S
GHOST
APPEARING IN
MAKURAZAKA
BEFORE,

BUT
RIKKA-SAN
AMPLIFIED
THEM.



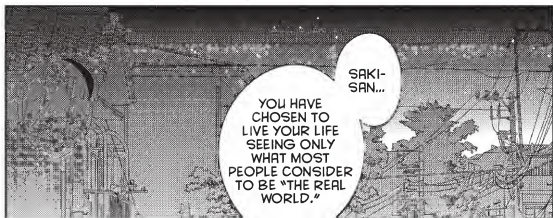


KURÔ-
SENPAI
REALIZED
THAT,
TOO.

HE HEARD
THE STEEL
LADY NANASE
RUMORS
WHILE HE WAS
LOOKING FOR
RIKKA-SAN,
AND STARTED
TO GROW
SUSPICIOUS.



THEN *HE*
FOUND THE WIKI
AND SAW THE
PICTURE, AND
HIS SUSPICION
WAS CONFIRMED,
SO HE CAME TO
MAKURAZAKA
TO FIND
CLUES.



SAKI-
SAN...

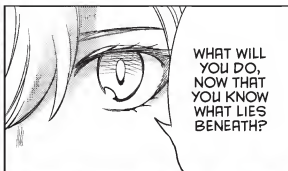
YOU HAVE
CHOSEN TO
LIVE YOUR LIFE
SEEING ONLY
WHAT MOST
PEOPLE CONSIDER
TO BE "THE REAL
WORLD."



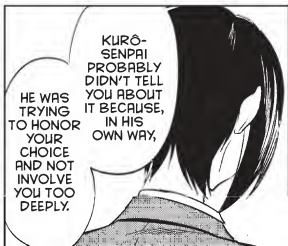
...I
SEE.

SO
RIKKA-SAN
HAS THE SAME
KUDAN ABILITY
TO CONTROL
THE FUTURE
THAT KURŌ-
KUN DOES,
AND SHE'S
PULLING THE
STRINGS.

THAT'S
HOW STEEL
LADY
NANASE
MATURED
THIS
QUICKLY.



WHAT WILL
YOU DO,
NOW THAT
YOU KNOW
WHAT LIES
BENEATH?



KURŌ-
SENPAI
PROBABLY
DIDN'T TELL
YOU ABOUT
IT BECAUSE,
IN HIS
OWN WAY,
HE WAS
TRYING
TO HONOR
YOUR
CHOICE
AND NOT
INVOLVE
YOU TOO
DEEPLY.



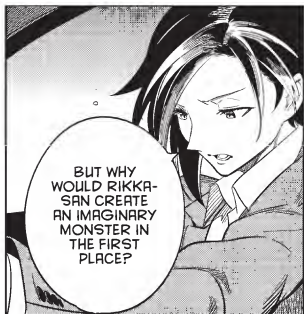
GRIP



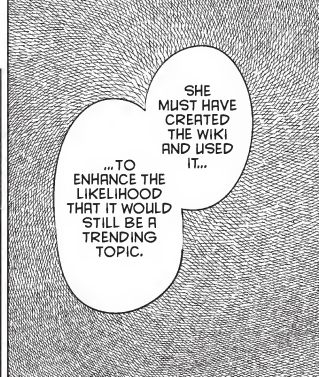
I
SUSPECT
SHE WANTED
A FUTURE
WHERE
PEOPLE
ON THE
INTERNET
NEVER
STOPPED
TALKING
ABOUT
STEEL LADY
NANASE,

SO SHE
DIED, TOOK
HOLD OF THE
FUTURE SHE
WANTED, AND
CAME BACK
TO LIFE,
AGAIN AND
AGAIN.

MOST
LIKELY.



BUT WHY
WOULD RIKKA-
SAN CREATE
AN IMAGINARY
MONSTER IN
THE FIRST
PLACE?



SHE
MUST HAVE
CREATED
THE WIKI
AND USED
IT...

...TO
ENHANCE THE
LIKELIHOOD
THAT IT WOULD
STILL BE A
TRENDING
TOPIC.

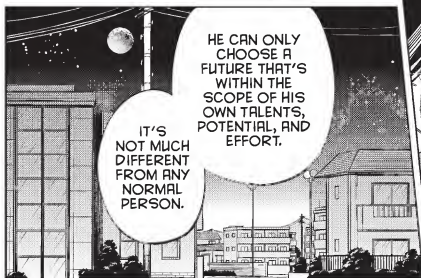


KURŌ-
SENPAI
SAID SO,
TOO.

SHE MAY
HAVE THE
POWER TO
DETERMINE
THE FUTURE,
BUT IT'S
ACTUALLY
NOT THAT
GREAT AN
ABILITY.



WHAT
COULD SHE
GAIN FROM
CREATING
A MONSTER
THAT KILLS
PEOPLE AT
RANDOM?



IT'S
NOT MUCH
DIFFERENT
FROM ANY
NORMAL
PERSON.

HE CAN ONLY
CHOOSE A
FUTURE THAT'S
WITHIN THE
SCOPE OF HIS
OWN TALENTS,
POTENTIAL, AND
EFFORT.

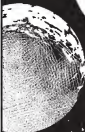


IT MIGHT
SEEM
CONVENIENT
TO BE
IMMORTAL,

BUT
IT MUST BE
TERRIFYING
TO SOMEONE
WHO'S NOT
INCLINED
TO LIVE
ALONE FOR
ETERNITY.



... BUT SHE
MANAGED
TO MAKE A
MONSTER.



BECAUSE
A FUTURE
WITHIN THOSE
BOUNDS IS
THE ONLY KIND
OF FUTURE ANY
OF US CAN
CHOOSE.

THE ONLY
DIFFERENCE
IS THAT IF THE
POSSIBILITY
IS STRONG
ENOUGH, THEIR
POWER CAN
MAKE SURE IT
DEFINITELY
HAPPENS.

IT'S
NOT LIKE
THEY CAN
CRANK OUT
MIRACLES.



SHE
STACKS
POSSIBILITY
UPON
POSSIBIL-
ITY...

...AND
CHOSEN
FUTURE ON
CHOSEN
FUTURE.

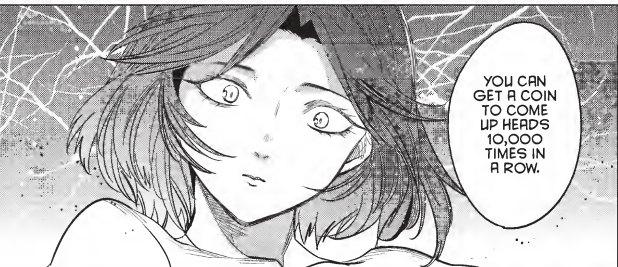
SHE'S
SEEING
HOW
FAR HER
ABILITY TO
DECIDE THE
FUTURE
CAN TAKE
HER.

AS I WAS
EXPLAINING,
RIKKA-SAN
IS TESTING
HERSELF.



IF YOU
TAKE A
PHENOMENON
WITH A FIFTY-
FIFTY CHANCE
OF HAPPENING
AND MAKE IT
HAPPEN TEN
TIMES IN
A ROW,

THEN
YOU GET
A PHE-
NOMENON
THAT ONLY
HAS A ONE
IN 1024
CHANCE OF
OCCUR-
RING.



YOU CAN
GET A COIN
TO COME
UP HEADS
10,000
TIMES IN
A ROW.



NORMALLY,
SHE WOULD
HAVE VERY
LITTLE
CHANCE
OF COMING
TO LIFE.

STEEL LADY
NANASE IS
ONE OF THOSE
VARIATIONS.



BUT MAKING
A MONSTER
ISN'T GOING
TO TAKE HER
ANYWHERE.



POOF

ホ

ZOOM



MY
LADY!

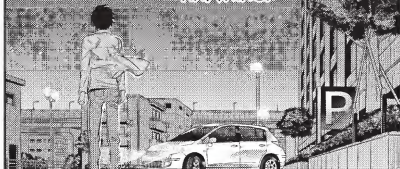


RUSTLE





WHATEVER
RIKKA-
SAN'S
GOAL, IT
DOESN'T
CHANGE
ANYTHING.

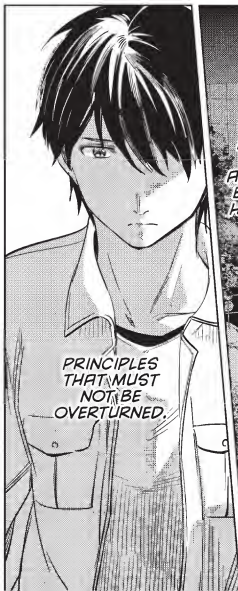


YES, MY
LADY.

YOU
SHOW THE
WAY.



IT MAY BE
FULL OF
YOKAI,
MONSTERS,
SPECTRES,
AND DEMONS,
BUT IT DOES
HAVE ORDER.



PRINCIPLES
THAT MUST
NOT BE
OVERTURNED.



THIS
WORLD
IS NOT
UNCERTAIN.





**AND IT IS
MY JOB TO
PROTECT
THEM.**



<573> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:03 ID:lkreb
Gimme more Karin-chan pics!

<574> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:05 ID:tadsPhe
It's almost the Steel-Witching hour.

<575> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:07 ID:~
No sightings yet?

KIH IN...
ID:~
~
~

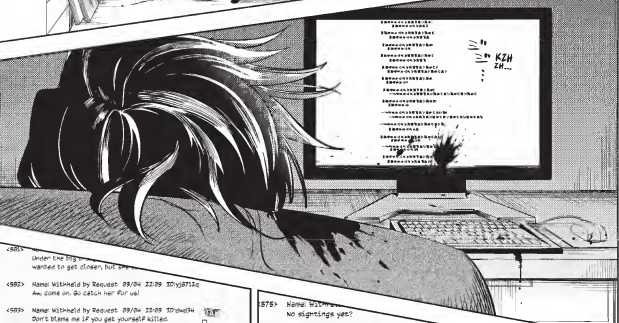
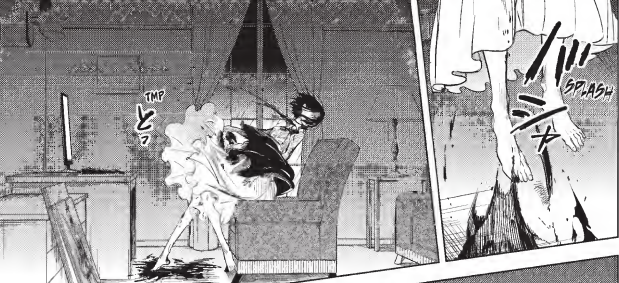
<576> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:07 ID:~
No sightings yet?

<576> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:07 ID:xethk
Do you think there will be another death tonight...?

ID:~
~
~

574> Name: Withheld
It's almost the
575> Name: Withheld
No sightings yet
576> Name: Withheld
Do you think the





<81> Under the big...
wanted to get closer, but she...

<82> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:yj6712q
Aw, come on. Go catch her for us!

<83> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:owd3h
Don't blame me if you get yourself killed.

<84> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
Steel Lady Nanase, come haunt me! Quick!

<85> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:rh5e
Yeah, right. There's no such thing.

<86> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:agres
Keep saying that stuff and you'll be cursed to death.

<87> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
Not cursed. Blessed with a steel be...

<88> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
If I get killed, will I end up without a nice like
shot detective?

<89> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:owd3h
Yeah, just like your Nanase.

<90> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
I wonder if I could find a picture of you in
only online somewhere.

<91> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
Why would you want one?

<92> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
I'm looking at portraits of our dead bo...

<93> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
Steel Lady Nanase, come haunt me! Quick!

<85> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:07 ID:shy45
No sightings yet?

<86> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:07 ID:shy45
Do you think there will be another death tonight...

<87> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:08 ID:shy45
I live in Makurazaki. I want to go to the corner
store, but I'm too scared to leave the house.

<88> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
Steel Lady Nanase is out! I saw her!

<89> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
Where?

<90> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
Huh? Nanase's out?

<91> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
Under the big bridge. I was trying to decide if I
wanted to get closer, but she disappeared.

<92> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:yj6712q
Aw, come on. Go catch her for us!

<93> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:owd3h
Don't blame me if you get yourself killed.

<94> Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
Steel Lady Nanase, come haunt me! Quick!

Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
I want to go to the corner store, but I'm too scared to leave the house.

Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
I'm almost the Steel-Witching hour.

Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
No sightings yet?

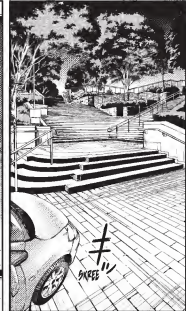
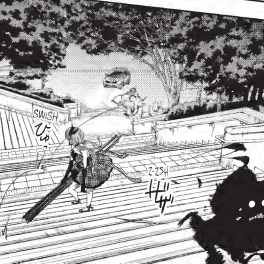
Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
You think there will be another?

Name: Withheld by Request 09/04 22:09 ID:shy45
I live in Makurazaki. I want to go to the corner store, but I'm too scared to leave the house.



S
W
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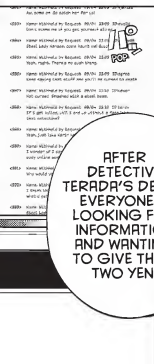


THIS IS
A GOOD PLACE.
HE'LL
BE ABLE TO
FIGHT STEEL
LADY NANASE
ALL NIGHT
HERE WITHOUT
ANYONE
GETTING IN
THE WAY.



BUT
I'M NOT
GOING TO
SIT BACK
AND LET MY
BOYFRIEND
GET HIMSELF
KILLED ALL
NIGHT LONG.

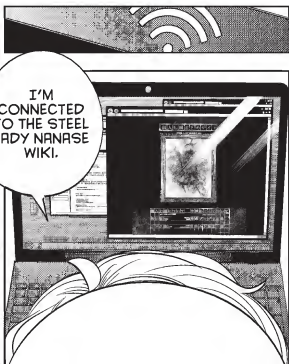
I KNOW
HE'S
GOING
TO COME
BACK TO
LIFE EVERY
TIME,



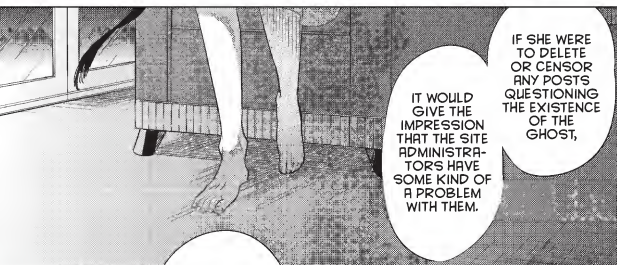
AFTER
DETECTIVE
TERADA'S DEATH,
EVERYONE'S
LOOKING FOR
INFORMATION
AND WANTING
TO GIVE THEIR
TWO YEN.

THE
FORUMS
HAD CALMED
DOWN FOR
A WHILE, BUT
NOW THEY'RE
ACTIVE AGAIN.

I'M
CONNECTED
TO THE STEEL
LADY NANASE
WIKI.

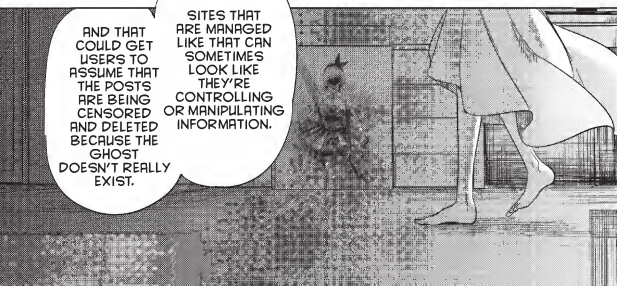






IT WOULD
GIVE THE
IMPRESSION
THAT THE SITE
ADMINISTRATORS
HAVE
SOME KIND OF
A PROBLEM
WITH THEM.

IF SHE WERE
TO DELETE
OR CENSOR
ANY POSTS
QUESTIONING
THE EXISTENCE
OF THE
GHOST,



AND THAT
COULD GET
USERS TO
ASSUME THAT
THE POSTS
ARE BEING
CENSORED
AND DELETED
BECAUSE THE
GHOST
DOESN'T REALLY
EXIST.

SITES THAT
ARE MANAGED
LIKE THAT CAN
SOMETIMES
LOOK LIKE
THEY'RE
CONTROLLING
OR MANIPULATING
INFORMATION.



BECAUSE
THEN KURŌ-
SENPŌI COULD
GRAB HOLD
OF THAT
POSSIBILITY
AND MAKE IT
A REALITY.

IF SUCH A
POSSIBILITY
WERE TO ARISE,
IT WOULD BE
COUNTERPRODUCTIVE
TO SOMEONE
WHO WANTS TO
GIVE STEEL LADY
NANASE PHYSICAL
FORM.



SO HER ONLY
CHOICE IS TO
LEAVE EVERY
POST UP ON
THE FORUMS.





ON THE OTHER HAND, IF SHE LEAVES THE SKEPTICAL POSTS ALONE, AND THEY GET OVERRULED,

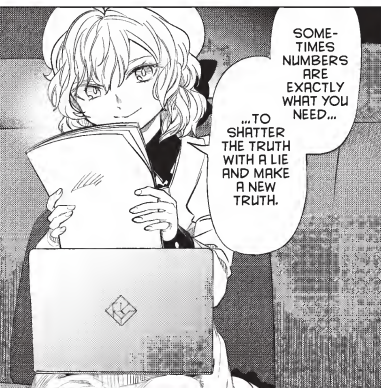
THE CURRENT OF THOUGHT WOULD TURN MORE STRONGLY TOWARD STEEL LADY NANASE'S PHYSICAL MANIFESTATION.

POWER UP!

SHE EXITS!

SHE DOESN'T EXIST

YOU-DU-DUN



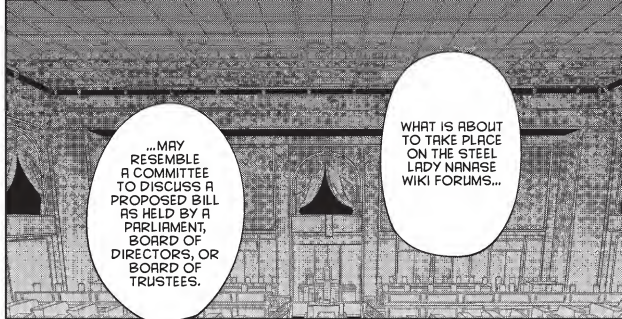
SOME-TIMES NUMBERS ARE EXACTLY WHAT YOU NEED...

...TO SHATTER THE TRUTH WITH A LIE AND MAKE A NEW TRUTH.



YOU SAID YOU CAME UP WITH FOUR SOLUTIONS.

IS IT REALLY JUST A MATTER OF THROWING AS MANY SOLUTIONS AT IT AS WE CAN?



...MAY
RESEMBLE
A COMMITTEE
TO DISCUSS A
PROPOSED BILL
AS HELD BY A
PARLIAMENT,
BOARD OF
DIRECTORS, OR
BOARD OF
TRUSTEES.

WHAT IS ABOUT
TO TAKE PLACE
ON THE STEEL
LADY NANASE
WIKI FORUMS...



THE
MATTER
UP FOR
DISCUSSION
IS THIS:



OR
ISN'T
THERE?



IS THERE
REALLY A
GHOST
CALLED
STEEL LADY
NANASE?

Steel Lady
Nanase is
real.

ATTEMPTED
ASSAULTS

MURDER OF DE-
TECTIVE TERADA

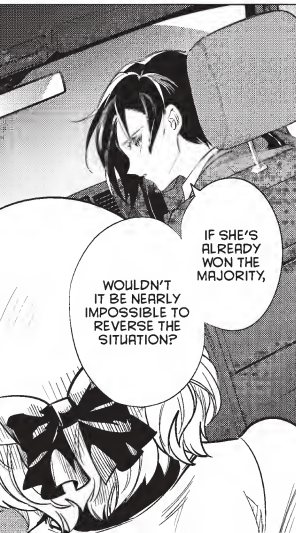
FORUMS

THE IMAGE OF STEEL
LADY NANASE

KARIN NANASE'S
ACCIDENT/SUICIDE

RIKKA-
SAN HAS
ALREADY
GAINED
MAJORITY
SUPPORT,

AND
SHE HAS
A WELL-
GROUNDED
ARGUMENT
IN FAVOR OF
THE STEEL
LADY'S
EXISTENCE.



WOULDN'T
IT BE NEARLY
IMPOSSIBLE TO
REVERSE THE
SITUATION?

IF SHE'S
ALREADY WON THE
MAJORITY,

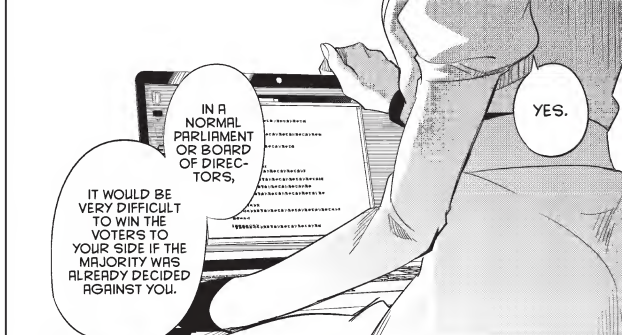


END



CAN I
SOMEHOW
OVERTURN
THE MAJORITY
OPINION
AND WIN
THE VOTE?

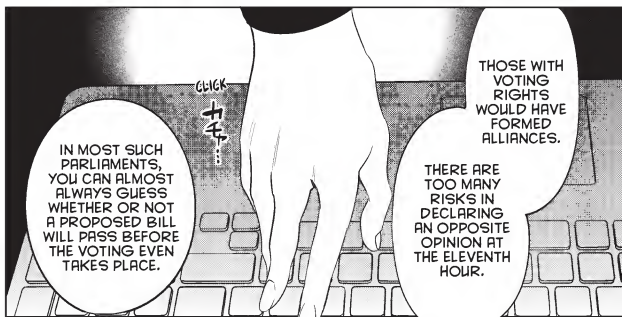
THAT IS
WHERE I
GET TO
SHOW
OFF MY
SKILL.



IN A
NORMAL
PARLIAMENT
OR BOARD OF
DIRECTORS,

IT WOULD BE
VERY DIFFICULT
TO WIN THE
VOTERS TO
YOUR SIDE IF THE
MAJORITY WAS
ALREADY DECIDED
AGAINST YOU.

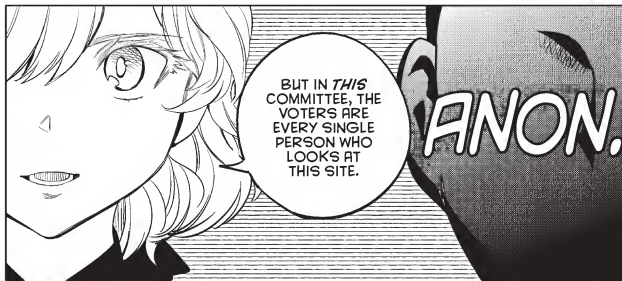
YES.



IN MOST SUCH
PARLIAMENTS,
YOU CAN ALMOST
ALWAYS GUESS
WHETHER OR NOT
A PROPOSED BILL
WILL PASS BEFORE
THE VOTING EVEN
TAKES PLACE.

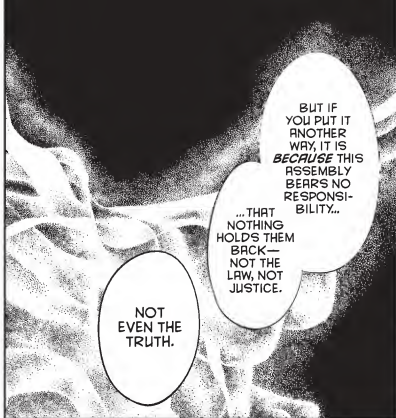
THOSE WITH
VOTING
RIGHTS
WOULD HAVE
FORMED
ALLIANCES.

THERE ARE
TOO MANY
RISKS IN
DECLARING
AN OPPOSITE
OPINION AT
THE ELEVENTH
HOUR.



BUT IN *THIS*
COMMITTEE, THE
VOTERS ARE
EVERY SINGLE
PERSON WHO
LOOKS AT
THIS SITE.

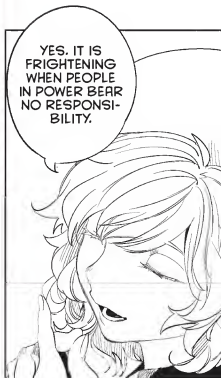
ANON.



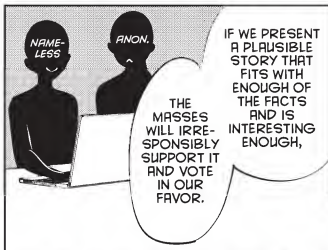
NOT
EVEN THE
TRUTH.

... THAT
NOTHING
HOLDS THEM
BACK—
NOT THE
LAW, NOT
JUSTICE.

BUT IF
YOU PUT IT
ANOTHER
WAY, IT IS
BECAUSE THIS
ASSEMBLY
BEARS NO
RESPONSI-
BILITY...

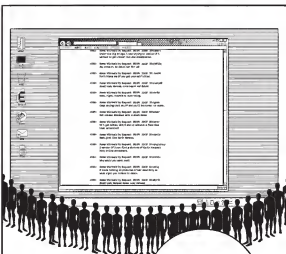


YES. IT IS
FRIGHTENING
WHEN PEOPLE
IN POWER BEAR
NO RESPONSI-
BILITY.



THE
MASSES
WILL IRRE-
SPONSIBLY
SUPPORT IT
AND VOTE
IN OUR
FAVOR.

IF WE PRESENT
A PLAUSIBLE
STORY THAT
FITS WITH
ENOUGH OF
THE FACTS
AND IS
INTERESTING
ENOUGH,



EVEN IF THE
SOLUTION IS
UNJUST OR
UNTRUE,

AS LONG
AS THE
MAJORITY OF
THE TENS OF
THOUSANDS OF
SITE VIEWERS
SUPPORT IT,
WE WIN.



WHICH
MEANS THAT
IN *THIS*
COMMITTEE,
ANYTHING
GOES.

...AND
ROLL OUT
SEVERAL
CONTRA-
DICTING
ANSWERS.

AS LONG
AS THEY'RE
REASONABLE
AT A GLANCE
AND ENTER-
TAINING
ENOUGH...

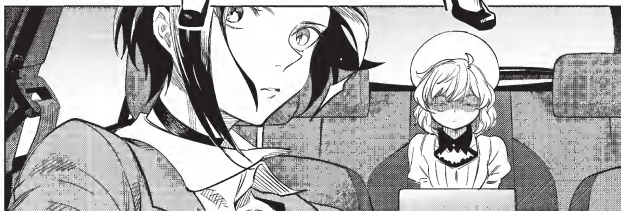
WE CAN
HIDE OR
OBSCURE
THE REAL
INFORMATION,
CALL BLACK
WHITE...



AND
IN THIS
COMMITTEE,
WE CAN
GET AWAY
WITH IT.

... THEN WE
CAN TURN
FICTION
INTO FACT.

WHOOOOOSH







I WILL
STOP AT
NOTHING
TO WIN
THIS.

I WILL
PUT ALL
OF MY
POWER
INTO
THESE
LIES.



THE
COMMITTEE
TO CONQUER
STEEL LADY
NANASE IS
NOW IN
SESSION.







keep the depictions of daily commodities simple. Even so, while I was writing this book, I couldn't have imagined that certain internet and social media services would have become so popular, to the extent that it may seem unnatural that they don't appear in the story. On the other hand, even if I had been able to put them in, it's possible that it wouldn't have been long before they would have outdated the work. Even the shape of cell phones has changed a lot in a short amount of time—when the novel was first printed, there was a phrase, “She popped open her cell phone,” that I took out for the new edition. It isn't easy.

And then when it becomes a manga, so many more things need to be presented in a clear picture, so it gets even harder to create the right atmosphere. I thoughtlessly made “modernness” a key part of the story, which must have created several problems for Katase-sensei, who has to draw props and people and backgrounds in a way that doesn't create inconsistency with the setting or the logic that goes with it, and that doesn't make the “modern day” feel old. It must be difficult to maintain this balance. This could be a real test of your esprit.

So what *is* esprit, anyway? Years ago, it would have taken time and effort to look up the word, but now anybody can just do a quick, easy search with their cell phone and get the answer in a split second. Times have changed.

Now then, this is the volume where the person pulling all the strings on the Steel Lady Nanase urban legend is finally identified, and I think it's fairly clear who's behind the crime, how they did it, and why. With so many questions answered, there would only be a few pages left in a normal mystery novel, but for this story, we're only just getting to the good part. The battle of lies to turn a lie-born truth back into a lie is about to begin.

Well, I hope you'll read the next volume.

Kyo Shirodaira

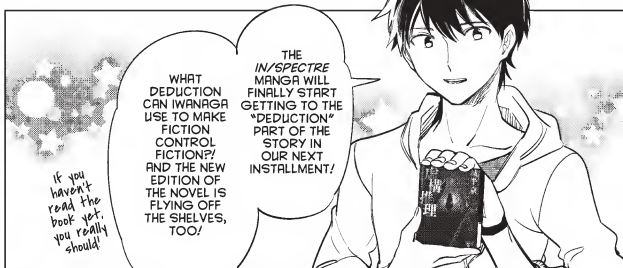
I'm the author, Kyo Shirodaira. We're already at volume four. That was fast.

I'm always saying this, but although I am the original author, I'm not doing anything in particular for the manga. If I had to say I did something, it'd be that what I do is read the new chapter when it's published and tell the editor what I thought of it. I suspect there would be no damage to the manga if I did not offer these opinions, but if I don't show people that, “Yes, I am the author, I do read the manga of my work,” people might think, “Wow, you're some kinda jerky author who doesn't even care about your own work, ain't ya?” On the other hand, if all I say is, “That was another good chapter,” people might laugh at me behind my back, saying, “Thou hast no esprit, my good fellow,” so I'm always doing my best to give intelligent feedback. Although you would be quite right to point out that no, that's not where I should be focusing my effort. And what is “esprit,” anyway? I think it's the name of some delicious mineral water.

Putting all of that aside, this story takes place in the modern day, and when writing a “modern day” story, what gets tricky is depicting the normal, everyday aspects. When I write, I can use a phrase that's modern, common, and everyday at the time, but in extreme situations, it may have fallen out of use by the time the book is published, and that immediately makes the work seem outdated.

When I write a novel, I try to avoid anachronisms as much as possible. I never specify the year it takes place; I try not to use trendy words, new words that haven't been established in the vernacular, or overly slangy words; and I intentionally





If you haven't read the book yet, you really should!

WHAT DEDUCTION CAN IWANAGA USE TO MAKE FICTION CONTROL FICTION?! AND THE NEW EDITION OF THE NOVEL IS FLYING OFF THE SHELVES, TOO!

THE IN/SPECTRE MANGA WILL FINALLY START GETTING TO THE "DEDUCTION" PART OF THE STORY IN OUR NEXT INSTALLMENT!

BOOK: KYO SHIRODAIRA, INVENTED INFERENCE: STEEL LADY NANASE



WE ALWAYS STARTED WITH A GAG, SO I DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE.

Isn't it a little late?

WE'RE IN THE FOURTH VOLUME AND NOW YOU'RE DOING PUBLICITY FOR THE NOVEL?

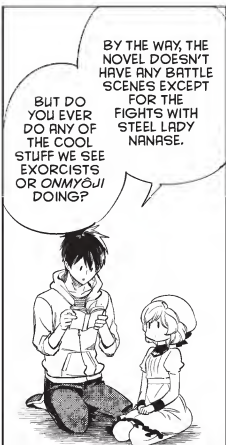


AS A GODDESS OF WISDOM, MY SERVICES GENERALLY CONSIST OF CONSULTATIONS WITH THOSE SEEKING ADVICE...



HUH.

...BUT I DO SOMETIMES EXORCISE EVIL SPIRITS WITH RITUALS AND TOOLS OF THAT SORT, YES.



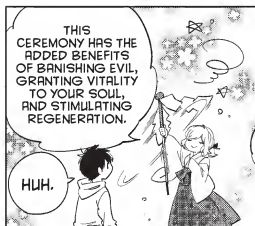
BY THE WAY, THE NOVEL DOESN'T HAVE ANY BATTLE SCENES EXCEPT FOR THE FIGHTS WITH STEEL LADY NANASE.

BUT DO YOU EVER DO ANY OF THE COOL STUFF WE SEE EXORCISTS OR ONMYOJI DOING?



ALLOW
ME TO
EXORCISE
YOU.

WELL
THEN! WE
WOULDN'T
WANT ANY
EVIL DEMONS
POSSESSING
YOU, KURŌ-
SENPAI.



THIS
CEREMONY HAS THE
ADDED BENEFITS
OF BANISHING EVIL,
GRANTING VITALITY
TO YOUR SOUL,
AND STIMULATING
REGENERATION.

HUH.



SHIMMER

POOF



THIS
IS PART OF
THE
RITUAL.

IT HAS A
PURIFYING
EFFECT.

SMACK
POF
?



FIRST,
SOME
RED INK
ON YOUR
THUMB.



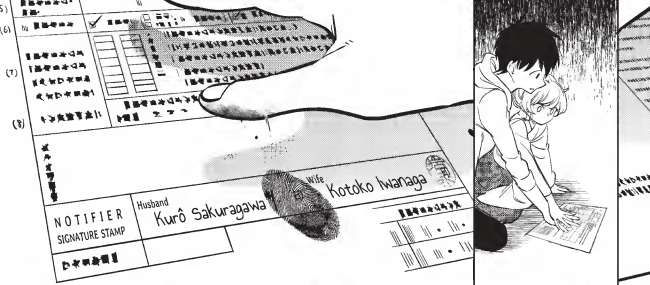
ALL
RIGHT,
HERE
GOES.

AM I
GOING TO
BE OKAY
AFTER
THIS?

UM... I'M
ACTUALLY A
HUMAN MIXED
WITH TWO
KINDS OF
YŌKAI.

This
exorcism.





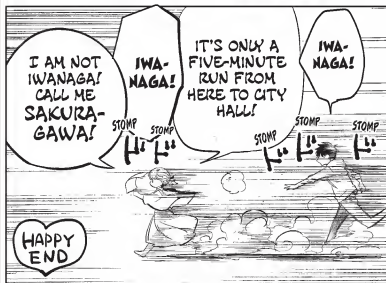
- STAFF -

Otôamu
Kuro shima
Tonpu
Yamamoto
Yutsu

- Editors -

O-kawa
T-da

(honorifics
excluded)



ln

/

Spec

tre



Volume

4



TRANSLATION NOTES



Do not cross this bridge, page 54

This is a reference to a story about Ikkyū-san, a Buddhist monk known for his quick wit. In this story, he comes across a bridge, in front of which is a sign that says *Kono hashi wataru bekarazu*, or "Do not cross this bridge." Clever as always, Ikkyū-san takes another meaning for the word *hashi* (bridge), and decides the sign means "Do not cross the edges." Therefore, he would not be breaking any rules if he were to cross the bridge in the center.

Onmyōji, page 166

An onmyōji is a practitioner of onmyōdō, or the way of Yin and Yang. It is a form of divination that mixes natural science and occultism, using the Five Elements as well as Yin and Yang. An onmyōji specializes in divination and magic, including exorcism.





A myriad of nuptial cups, page 168

Here Kotoko is reciting bits and pieces of a Shinto prayer, commonly used for a very specific ceremony. The ceremony usually involves two people and a priest, who prays for the health, happiness, and prosperity of the couple.

a Silent Voice

KODANSHA
COMICS

"The word
heartwarming
was made for
manga like this."
-Manga Book-
shelf

"A harsh
and biting social
commentary... delivers
in its depth of char-
acter and emotional
strength." -Comics
Bulletin

"A
very powerful
story about being
different and the con-
sequences of childhood
bullying... Read it."
-Anime News
Network



Shoya is a bully. When Shoko, a girl who can't hear, enters his elementary school class, she becomes their favorite target, and Shoya and his friends goad each other into devising new tortures for her. But the children's cruelty goes too far. Shoko is forced to leave the school, and Shoya ends up shouldering all the blame. Six years later, the two meet again. Can Shoya make up for his past mistakes, or is it too late?

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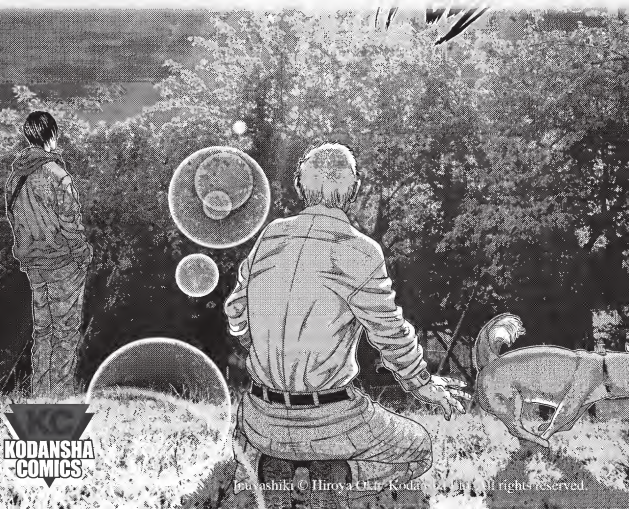
INUYASHIKI

**A superhero like none
you've ever seen, from the
creator of "Gantz"!**

ICHIRO INUYASHIKI IS DOWN ON HIS LUCK. HE LOOKS MUCH OLDER THAN HIS 58 YEARS, HIS CHILDREN DESPISE HIM, AND HIS WIFE THINKS HE'S A USELESS COWARD. SO WHEN HE'S DIAGNOSED WITH STOMACH CANCER AND GIVEN THREE MONTHS TO LIVE, IT SEEMS THE ONLY ONE WHO'LL MISS HIM IS HIS DOG.

THEN A BLINDING LIGHT FILLS THE SKY, AND THE OLD MAN IS KILLED... ONLY TO WAKE UP LATER IN A BODY HE ALMOST RECOGNIZES AS HIS OWN. CAN IT BE THAT ICHIRO INUYASHIKI IS NO LONGER HUMAN?

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In/Spectre 4

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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First published in Japan in 2016 by Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo.
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English digital edition published by Kodansha Advanced Media, LLC,
San Francisco.

www.kodanshacomics.com

ISBN: 9781682336694

Digital Edition: 1.0.0

Translation: Alethea Nibley & Athena Nibley

Lettering: Lys Blakeslee

Editing: Ajani Oloye

Kodansha Comics edition cover design: Phil Balsman

